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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Scottish Noblewomen, the Family and Scottish Politics from 1688-1707

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**Scottish Noblewomen, the Family and
Scottish Politics from 1688-1707**

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Degree of Ph.D.

University of Dundee

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HISTORY

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I,, am the author of this thesis; that, unless otherwise stated, all references cited have been consulted by me; that the work of which the thesis is a record has been done by me; and that this thesis has not, in whole or part, been previously accepted for a higher degree.

Signed:

Date:.....

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that has done this research under my supervision and that he has fulfilled the conditions of the relevant ordinances of the University of Dundee so that he is qualified to submit for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Signed:

Date:.....

Abstract

The Scottish perspective of the Glorious Revolution of 1688 has received limited scholarly attention. The opposite is true of the Union of 1707 and this defining moment, which resulted in the loss of Scottish independence, continues to stimulate debate. The lives of Scottish noblewomen in the years from Revolution to Union have generally been disregarded. This thesis will demonstrate that acknowledging and exploring the experiences of noblewomen augments understanding of this momentous era. Investigating the lives of Scottish noblewomen using their letters to explore how they lived through the Revolution, the ‘ill years’ of King William’s reign, the Darien venture, European war and ultimately the negotiation of Union provides fresh perspectives on the social, economic and political life of Scotland. Recovering the experience of noblewomen engages with a wider process in Scottish history which has transformed understanding in some areas of historical study but has by no means permeated all. Redefining female political activity has illuminated the influence of elite English women in the later eighteenth century. Scottish noblewomen require similar extensive study. The research presented here supports the argument that political analysis alone cannot provide the fullest assessment of this period. Women are revealed as a vital element within social aspects of political manoeuvring and both created and maintained family networks. This research challenges the constricting framework of the public and private dichotomy. It aims to reveal and redefine the responsibilities of noblewomen within an expanded sphere of activity and suggests a much more inclusive role for women than has previously been considered. The formation of a British parliament in 1707 reduced the number of Scots parliamentarians and changed the role of the governing elite in Scotland but did not diminish Scottish women’s influence and participation. This thesis argues that Scottish noblewomen operated with autonomy within patriarchal parameters to support menfolk, exert authority and in some cases wield significant influence. Demonstrating their roles, abilities and a new form of social politics at work in Scotland is a vital part of understanding the post Union period and the development of British politics.

Abbreviations

Blair MS – Blair Castle Archives

NAS- National Archives of Scotland

Introduction

I

In January 1689 John Murray, first marquis of Atholl (1631-1703), failed to join fellow Scots nobles who were rushing to London to meet William, Prince of Orange. In response to the increasingly arbitrary rule of James VII and his attacks on Protestantism, William of Orange, nephew and son-in-law of James, had been invited by the ‘immortal seven’ to secure the Protestant religion and maintain the liberty of England.¹ Commanding an invasion force which included English and Scots exiles he landed at Torbay on November fifth 1688 and by December twenty-third James VII had fled to France with his wife, Mary of Modena, and their infant son.² In reaction to these events Atholl’s son, Lord John Murray, later earl of Tullibardine and then first duke of Atholl (1660-1724), went to London in his father’s stead but it was left to Amelia, marchioness of Atholl (d. 1703) to enquire after her son’s progress and also to make excuses for her husband. She gave her reaction to events and reported on what she perceived was happening in Scotland in response to the arrival of William and Mary and the flight of James VII. She wrote;

I have bin allmost tempted to wish he [the Marquis] had gon from me with the crowd, who consider’d their own interest & safety, which he did not, for I swear he has nothing but trouble heer to keip the poore country from being altogether in confusion, & every body thinks there would have bin nothing but cutting of throats if he had not stayed...³

¹T. Harris, *Revolution, The Great Crisis of the British Monarchy, 1685-1720* (London, 2006), pp. 1-15.

² Harris, *Revolution*, pp. 1-15.

³ J. Atholl, *Chronicles of the Atholl and Tullibardine Families*, (2 vols, Edinburgh, 1908), I, p. 271; Blair MS 29.I.(5).90 Marchioness of Atholl to Lord Murray, [Edinburgh] 3 January 1689.

After intelligence had reached her that her husband was best advised by his friends to go at once to London in order to gain favour with the man who would become king, she defended his initial decision to remain in Scotland.⁴ The Marquis himself wrote a postscript in her letter insisting that some who were, 'disaffected to the Prince of Orange', would have fled the country without his personal intervention to prevent them. His wife was keen to inform her son that Atholl had, 'made his Highness declaration; proclaim'd with sound of trumpet and all solemnitie, at the cross heer in Edinburgh', and asked that he let the Prince 'knowe so much' had been done by them.⁵ Although the Glorious Revolution has been regarded as being carried out, 'swiftly, with near unanimity and without significant bloodshed', personal and family responses to this event were complex.⁶ The Murray of Atholl family were Episcopalian and in general favoured the Stuart line, a loyalty that would resurface in the rebellions of 1715 and '45, but, like many noble families, they knew when to accommodate a change of regime in order to survive.⁷

⁴ Patrick Riley outlines Atholl's behaviour and intentions at this time suggesting that he was 'outmanoeuvred' by other magnates who had persuaded him to stay in Scotland so that he might gain control of the Scottish administration. Realising he was in 'the wrong place' in Edinburgh, Atholl then went to London to assure William of his support but, 'resumed his Jacobite connections'. Riley claims all Scottish magnates at this time were driven purely by personal interest in position and wealth from office. This view has been challenged by recent historiography and Riley makes no reference to the Marchioness' role, see P. W. J. Riley, *King William and the Scottish Politicians* (Edinburgh, 1979), pp. 11-13.

⁵ Riley, *King William*, pp. 272.

⁶ Lois Schwoerer explores the term 'glorious revolution' and the historiography surrounding this event, especially a prevailing argument that the Revolution of 1688 was less important than events of the 1640s and 1650s and the Restoration period, see L. G. Schwoerer (ed.), *The Revolution of 1688-1689: Changing Perspectives* (Cambridge, 1992). Jones and Speck also argue for greater attention to the Revolution in terms of, 'preventing an absolutist regime emerging', and discuss the absolutist tendencies of James VII and how this stemmed from the Restoration settlement which had restored the crown 'unconditionally', see J. R. Jones, *The Revolution of 1688 in England* (London, 1972), pp. 1-7 and W. A. Speck, *Reluctant Revolutionaries, Englishmen and the Revolution of 1688* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 17-21.

⁷ Accepting the Revolution was a complex issue for Episcopals and some, although supportive of the Stuarts, were alienated by James VII's attacks on Protestantism. Others, Williamite Episcopals, threw in their lot with the Prince of Orange in the hope that Episcopacy would be preserved or accommodated in some form, see T. Harris, 'The People, the Law and the Constitution: A Comparative Approach to the Glorious Revolution', *Journal of British Studies*, No. 38 (January, 1999), pp. 28-58; Riley, *King William*, pp. 4-7.

The role that the Marchioness assumed during this event and the part that she played is of fundamental importance to this thesis. Noblewomen were an essential element of how any noble family functioned and this episode provides a clear example of the way women were often at the centre of major issues and responses to national events. It was she who requested information from her son in London and she who was with her husband in Edinburgh at the heart of Scottish reaction. Her letters suggest she chose either to stress the strength of public response in Scotland or her husband's loyalty and service, whichever was necessary.⁸ This letter, and others, shows her ability to support, inform and advise her husband using her own initiative and independence which illustrates her strength of character.⁹ This thesis will demonstrate that the Marchioness was not unique among Scottish noblewomen as many shared these characteristics and events demanded their interest and involvement.

The years from 1688 up to the Union of 1707 were some of the most turbulent in Scottish history. Exploring how Scottish noblewomen reacted to the upheaval caused by religious, economic and political affairs in this period is a key objective in this thesis. The personal letters of Scottish noblewomen which have survived provide a useful means of understanding how these events affected the Scots nobility in general and noblewomen in particular. Women related to noblemen who formed the governing elite in Scotland created a distinctive role for themselves as they coped with crisis and change. The first clue to the diversity of the roles they assumed can be found among

⁸ There were some crowd disturbances and these were as much anti Catholic as anti Episcopalian however it is not clear if these were reasonably reflected in the Marchioness' letter, C. A. Whatley with D. J. Patrick, *The Scots and the Union* (Edinburgh, 2007), pp. 92-93; D. J. Patrick, 'Unconventional Procedure: Scottish electoral politics after the Revolution', in K. M. Brown and A. J. Mann (eds.), *Parliament and Politics in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2005); Harris, 'People, Law and Constitution', p. 34.

⁹ Various letters from the Marchioness over many years suggest the independence of her advice and influence. A particular example of her support and similar manoeuvring occurred in 1689 when the Marquis withdrew to Bath on health grounds, a decision which has been generally accepted as a means of distancing himself from Viscount Dundee's Jacobite resistance, see Atholl, *Chronicles, I*, pp. 289-314.

their personal letters where their opinions and comments were expressed to women and men alike.

Another noblewoman related to the Atholl family by marriage was Elizabeth Villiers, countess of Orkney (1657-1733). She had been William II's mistress before marrying Lord George Hamilton, later earl of Orkney (1666-1737) in 1695.¹⁰ She wrote to her sister-in-law Lady Katherine Murray, Countess of Tullibardine (1662-1707), in 1700.¹¹ Lady Orkney gave her views on the state of the country, writing:

I dare not speak upon the misfortunes that Scotland lyes under
because itt is unavoidable not to blame the conduct of some,
& that is to no purpose unless one could alter them...¹²

Lady Orkney made reference in her letter to recent financial losses she and her husband had personally suffered but, given the overall situation for the nation, she wisely concluded that, 'tis not riches gives always a quiet mind'.¹³ Lady Orkney was right to be concerned for Scotland and had a clear view on where to apportion blame, a theme echoed by other Scots and also by noblewomen. By 1700 Scotland had suffered several years of unseasonably cold weather and failed harvests which had resulted in a famine with terrible consequences.¹⁴ The widespread investment and subsequent loss of capital in the failed Darien scheme, an attempt to settle a colony on the Isthmus of Panama in a bid to secure Atlantic trade, was another blow to the country.¹⁵ The later

¹⁰ R. Weil, 'Villiers [Hamilton], Elizabeth, countess of Orkney (c.1657-1733)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004); online edn, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28290>, accessed January 2012].

¹¹ R. K. Marshall, 'Hamilton, Katherine, duchess of Atholl (1662-1707)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004); online edn, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/70530>, accessed January 2012].

¹² Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 479; Blair MS 45.(1). 147 Elizabeth, Countess of Orkney to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [?] 21 July 1700.

¹³ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 479; Blair MS 45.(1). 147 Elizabeth, Countess of Orkney to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [?] 21 July 1700.

¹⁴ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 139-147.

¹⁵ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 166-175.

years of the 1690s were known as the ‘ill years’ of King William’s reign and the European war he pursued further strained the country’s finances.¹⁶ The untimely death of King William in 1702 and the accession of his wife’s sister, Anne, brought another monarch expecting loyalty amid concerns for the protection of the Protestant faith.¹⁷ The question of who would succeed Queen Anne created more difficulties amid the ongoing negotiations for union between Scotland and England which William set in motion and which Anne pursued.¹⁸ Lady Katherine commented on these issues in 1704, in her continued correspondence with Lady Orkney.

I doubt not your ladyship has a better accompt from some here of what passes in our Parl; than I can give you, but in short I bleive you’ll find it truth, what my lord told you, that it would be impossible to settle the English Successour here without some raisonable terms from England for us and now I believe it is pretty evident that, undertake it who will, they’ll fail in their measures without some honourable terms be granted us...¹⁹

The years preceding union saw Scots intensely interested in the negotiations, the main issues of which were widely debated with the treaty voted upon and ratified in 1707. Just as Lady Katherine’s letter indicates, parliamentary news was deliberately sought and shared by the women as well as the men and the views expressed in this example were shared by many Scots.²⁰ However, Lady Katherine’s wider correspondence suggests her opinions and her opposition to union were very much a personal decision.

¹⁶ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 157-166.

¹⁷ Queen Mary succumbed to illness in 1694 while William died of complications after falling from his horse, and, having no children, the crown passed to Mary’s sister, Anne in 1702, see E. Gregg, *Queen Anne* (London, 1984), pp. 101-103.

¹⁸ James VI had previously considered political union and William, ‘urged those around him on his deathbed’, to press for union, Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 4.

¹⁹ Atholl, *Chronicles, II*, p. 31; Blair MS 45.(4).184 Katherine, Duchess of Atholl to Elizabeth, Countess of Orkney, [Holyrood House] 18 July 1704.

²⁰ The Act of Security of 1703 declared the Scots would choose their own successor to Queen Anne. The English preferred the Hanoverian succession, see Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 2, 6, 36 and 209-10.

Her experience, derived from her extant letters and religious writings, will be a central source for this thesis.

Impending union had galvanised differing factions and party politics was developing throughout this period.²¹ The main players were known to everyone, with magnate families such as Hamilton, Queensberry, Argyll and Atholl at the heart of Scottish politics.²² The emergence of a breakaway party, the '*squadrone volante*', was another key event. Breaking away from the Country party yet unable to fully align with the Court party this group was important as it was their voting power which eventually tipped the balance toward union.²³ Noblewomen's role in creating and maintaining networks of kin, some of which can be viewed as the nucleus of a party or faction, is another primary interest here. Rather than re-examining the ideology and aims of these groups the intention is to explore to what extent noblewomen facilitated such important political groupings. Exploring their part in the development of these groups can have implications in providing a fuller assessment of politicians' principles and patriotism. It is not the intention here to rewrite the history of the Revolution, the 1690s, Darien or the Union although our understanding of these events will be enriched by knowing more about women's roles throughout this period. The experiences of Scottish noblewomen in this era have yet to receive a thorough and detailed examination. Acknowledging that they have an equally important place in the history of these events is vital and the importance of their contribution cannot continue to be ignored.

²¹ K. M. Brown, 'Party Politics and Parliament: Scotland's Last Election and its Aftermath, 1702-2', in Brown and Mann, *Parliament and Politics*, pp. 245-286; C. A. Whatley and D. J. Patrick, 'Persistence, Principle and Patriotism in the Making of the Union of 1707: the Revolution, Scottish Parliament and the *squadrone volante*' *History*, Vol. 92, No. 306 (April, 2007), pp. 162-186.

²² P. W. J. Riley, *The Union of England and Scotland* (Manchester, 1978), pp. 11-16.

²³ A prevailing argument has labelled this group 'political opportunists', a view that has been challenged recently, see Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 35, 232 and 244-245.

II

The way men faced the challenges to both church and state from 1688 to 1707 has been well documented.²⁴ Most studies concerning the Revolution tend to be about the English experience with Scotland only dealt with in passing. Other broader works on Scotland encompass the Revolution and subsequent events, up to and including Union; however these events are not the main focus.²⁵ Lois Schwoerer grasped the importance of adding a female perspective to her work on the Glorious Revolution and explores how women of all classes involved themselves to varying degrees.²⁶ Rachel Weil argues convincingly that noblewomen had a distinctive role in legitimising the son and heir of James VII. Weil highlights the importance of noblewomen's experience and contribution in settling the matter and argues that their knowledge and right to speak out, 'interfered with men's political rights'.²⁷ Her work, and Schwoerer's, demonstrates the ability women had to involve themselves in spheres of activity which have traditionally been perceived to be exclusively male. Apart from biographies on Queen Anne and her favourites, other noblewomen, particularly Scots noblewomen, have

²⁴ Patrick Riley refers to men within the Argyll, Queensberry, Atholl and Hamilton families in highlighting the main magnates but the only woman he refers to is Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, see Riley, *King William*, pp. 14, 128 and 30.

²⁵ Harris devotes separate chapters to Scotland and Ireland but overall his work concerns English history, Harris, *Revolution*, pp. 364-421. Others are clearly defined by their title as dealing only with an English perspective see, Jones, *Revolution in England*, and Speck, *Reluctant Revolutionaries*. Work concerning Scotland which encompasses the period but does not exclusively deal with these events include, R. A. Houston and I. D. Whyte (eds.), *Scottish Society 1500-1800* (Cambridge, 1989); J. Goodare, *State and Society in Early Modern Scotland* (Oxford, 1999); J. Hoppit (ed.), *Parliaments, Nations and Identities in Britain and Ireland 1660-1850* (Manchester, 2003) and T. C. Smout (ed.), *Anglo-Scottish Relation from 1603 to 1900* (Oxford, 2005).

²⁶ L. G. Schwoerer, 'Women and the Glorious Revolution', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Summer, 1986), pp. 195-218.

²⁷ R. Weil, 'The Politics of Legitimacy: Women and the Warming Pan Scandal', in Schwoerer, *Revolution*, pp. 65-80.

received little serious attention.²⁸ This thesis will explore whether Scottish noblewomen sought a life at Court or whether they cultivated connections at Court in order to gain access to the monarch. To fully assess the courtly role of Scottish noblewomen as well as their wider functions and responsibilities it is useful to determine where they feature within the historiography. Knowing when their contribution has been acknowledged and also where they have been overlooked is a useful starting point in assessing their lives.

Commentators and politicians from the period wrote accounts of major events from a variety of perspectives.²⁹ Edited family histories and printed collections of selected correspondence contain references to noblewomen and also some of their letters.³⁰ Noblewomen's inclusion in these sources is rarely consistent although some work has been devoted to noblewomen who have been considered particularly remarkable.³¹

²⁸ Schwoerer emphasises the power of both Queen Mary and, as she was at that time, Princess Anne, drawing attention to their part in efforts to settle the succession immediately after the invasion. Their politics and their power as well as the influence of favourite women have been given some consideration although women at court in this period generally have not, see Schwoerer, 'Women and the Glorious Revolution', p. 211. Biographies include, Gregg, *Queen Anne*; O. Field, *Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough; The Queen's Favourite* (London, 2002) and A. Somerset, *Queen Anne, The Politics of Passion* (London, 2012).

²⁹ Allan MacInnes provides a useful chronology of sources which include, G. Lockhart, *Memoirs Concerning the Affairs of Scotland, from Queen Anne's Accession to the Throne, to the Union of the Two Kingdoms of Scotland and England in May 1707* (London, 1714); Lindsay, Colin, third earl of Balcarres, *Memoirs Touching the Revolution in Scotland, 1688-1690* (Edinburgh, 1841); J. Mackay, *Memoirs of the Secret Services of John Mackay Esq. During the Reigns of King William, Queen Anne and King George I*, Second Edition, (Edinburgh, 1733); J. McCormick (ed.), *State Papers and Letters Addressed to William Carstairs* (Edinburgh, 1744), see A. MacInnes, *Union and Empire, The Making of the United Kingdom 1707* (Cambridge, 2007), pp.12-50.

³⁰ Family histories with edited correspondence include, Atholl, *Chronicles, I and II*; W. Fraser, *Memorials of the Montgomeries Earls of Eglinton* (Edinburgh, 1859); W. Fraser, *The Earls of Cromartie: Their Kindred, Country and Correspondence, Volume I* (Edinburgh, 1876); W. Fraser, *The Annandale Book of the Johnstones, Earls and Marquises of Annandale* (Edinburgh, 1894); J. Grant, *Seafield Correspondence from 1685 to 1708 Volume III* (Edinburgh, 1912); C. Innes, *The Black Book of Taymouth with Other Papers from the Breadalbane Charter Room* (Edinburgh 1855); D. Laing (ed.), *Correspondence of Sir Robert Kerr, First Earl of Ancrum and his son William, First Earl of Lothian* (Edinburgh, 1875); A. L. Lindsay, *Lives of the Lindsays A Memoir of the House of Crawford and Balcarres* (Edinburgh, 1849). G. H. Rose (ed.), *A Selection from the Papers of the Earls of Marchmont illustrative of events from 1685-1750, Volume III* (London, 1831); J. M. Warrender, *Marchmont and the Humes of Polwarth by one of their Descendants* (Edinburgh, 1894).

³¹ Particular studies of 'remarkable' women include A. L. Lindsay, *Memoir of Lady Anna Mackenzie, Countess of Balcarres and afterwards Argyll* (Edinburgh, 1868); Lady Murray of Stanhope, *Memoirs of the Lives and Characters of the Right Honourable George Baillie of Jerviswood and Lady Grisell Baillie*

Those deemed to have had extraordinary lives have often been given a one dimensional portrayal in the style of a romantic heroine which generally obscures useful analysis of female influence or engagement with political and family concerns. Stana Nenadic highlights this trend by arguing that eighteenth century Highland history has been written, ‘as though no woman, other than Flora Macdonald ever lived there’.³² Nenadic made this claim in 2001 and her recent work, and that of others, reflects the fact that women are receiving more appropriate treatment and inclusion in Scottish historiography.³³ However, women are still less visible in some eras than in others.

Exploring the famine and the ‘ill years’ of the later 1690s provides an insight into the post Revolution period and the pre Union years, yet the experience of noblewomen in this period is mostly overlooked. Karen Cullen has recently produced a monograph devoted to this subject but noblewomen only feature in relation to her demographic analysis and their personal experiences are not the main focus.³⁴ Much has been written about the Darien venture which does a great deal to illuminate the trade and economic situation in Scotland.³⁵ Douglas Watt includes analysis of the lists of shareholders and subscribers who invested in the scheme, ninety-one being women.³⁶ Once more the role noblewomen played in supporting this venture is acknowledged but not explored. As well as the ‘ill years’ and the Darien venture, war and the pressure of financing it

(Edinburgh, 1822); E. M. Graham, ‘Margaret Nairne: A Bundle of Jacobite Letters’, *Scottish Historical Review*, Vol IV, (1907); J. Baillie, *Metrical Legends of Exalted Characters* (London, 1821).

³² S. Nenadic, ‘Experience and Expectations in the Transformation of the Highland Gentlewoman, 1680 to 1820’, *The Scottish Historical Review*, Vol. LXXX, 2: No. 210: October 2001, pp. 201-220.

³³ S. Nenadic (ed.), *Scots in London in the Eighteenth Century* (New Jersey, 2010); K. Glover, *Elite Women and Polite Society in Eighteenth Century Scotland* (Woodbridge, 2010).

³⁴ Cullen’s introduction explains how a detailed study of the period had been previously lacking. Interestingly this had been noted by historians but this gap in knowledge did not hamper debate. Cullen’s work stresses the importance of such detailed analysis but also highlights how a general chronology can be almost universally accepted without firm evidence. The role of women would seem to suffer from the same problem, see K. J. Cullen, *Famine in Scotland: The ‘Ill Years’ of the 1690’s* (Edinburgh, 2010), pp. 1-9.

³⁵ The event features in most histories of the Union and Douglas Watt has provided the most recent comprehensive study, see D. Watt, *The Price of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2007).

³⁶ Watt, *Price of Scotland*, pp. 47-63.

brought further difficulties to the Scots during this period.³⁷ These events fed into the wider political issues and debates surrounding union and will be examined here from the perspective of noblewomen in chapters dealing with estate management, female patronage and noblewomen's overt political activity. To understand how noblewomen comprehended these issues, how they coped with them and what they understood was needed to address them adds another dimension to existing historiography.

Female religiosity is another area which has been overlooked by scholars and religion overall has received less attention than it might within union historiography.³⁸ The, 'notion that Scottish members of parliament supported (or opposed) incorporating union on account of their religious beliefs', and that, 'religious inclination was one of the elements that bound men together', has only recently been more fully explored.³⁹ Concerns over the future of Protestantism were accompanied by fears of a return to Catholic dominance which explains why religion was so important at the time of the Revolution and in the later debates on union.⁴⁰ The religiosity of noblewomen in particular will be given close examination here in a bid to augment arguments that parliamentarians' religious views held political sway. Coupled with familial religious experiences, the influence of pious and devoted wives and mothers should not be underestimated in their potential to strengthen religious links and so underpin political ideology.

³⁷ T. C. Smout outlines four disasters of the 1690s and highlights the impact of war and taxation. These issues recur in work specifically on union, see T. C. Smout, *Scottish Trade on the Eve of Union 1660-1707* (London, 1963), pp. 244-253; Riley, *Union*, pp. 197-213; W. Ferguson, *Scotland 1689 to the Present* (London, 1968), pp. 70-102; MacInnes, *Union and Empire*, pp. 173-181 and 217-219; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 138-183.

³⁸ J. Stephen, *Scottish Presbyterians and the Act of Union 1707* (Edinburgh, 2007); D. J. Patrick, 'The Kirk, Parliament and the Union, 1706-7', *Scottish Historical Review*, Vol. LXXXVII: 2008, pp. 94-115; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 38-39.

³⁹ Patrick, 'The Kirk', p. 94; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 34-35.

⁴⁰ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 36.

The ability of noblewomen to utilise their connections in order to make requests for pensions, preferment and positions is another area which has been all but ignored.⁴¹ This period has yielded no extensive studies on noblewomen's activities in regard to their understanding and use of patronage in the way similar work has illuminated the lives of English and European noblewomen.⁴² These studies argue that patronage flourished in the, 'grey areas between formal and informal politics', an area which linked the political and social arenas and one in which women could operate with some effect.⁴³ Exploring Scottish noblewomen's involvement in patronage and the networks they developed can reveal the broader structure and framework of political alliances. Understanding the efforts some noblewomen made to promote male careers, further family interest and secure money through patronage reveals differing levels of female ability and engagement. These highlight crucial distinctions in noblewomen's knowledge and personal capabilities and so have important implications for assessing female autonomy and influence.

Lois Schwoerer states in her article on women and the Glorious Revolution that if politics is, 'defined in traditional terms as the exercise of power by individuals through their office, voting and decision making, then there is nothing to say about women in

⁴¹ Some work does acknowledge female patronage but there are no extensive studies relating solely to the period 1688-1707, see, K. M. Brown, *Noble Society in Scotland, Wealth, Family and Culture from Reformation to Revolution* (Edinburgh 2004); L. Leneman, *Living in Atholl A Social History of the Estates 1685-1785* (Edinburgh, 1986); R. K. Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos: A History of Women in Scotland from 1080-1980* (London, 1983); S. Innes and J. Rendall, 'Women, Gender and Politics', in L. Abrams, E. Gordon, D. Simonton and E. Yeo (eds.), *Gender in Scottish History since 1700* (Edinburgh, 2006).

⁴² E. Chalus, *Elite Women in English Political Life c.1754-1790* (Oxford, 2005); J. Eales, *Women in Early Modern England 1500-1700* (London, 1998); S. Kettering, 'The Patronage Power of Early Modern French Noblewomen', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 32, No. 4. (December, 1989), pp. 817-841; S. Chapman, 'Patronage as Family Economy: The Role of Women in the Patron-Client Network of the Phelypeaux de Pontchartrain Family, 1670-1715', *French Historical Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1. (Winter, 2001), pp. 11-35; S. Hanley, 'Engendering the State: Family Formation and State Building in Early Modern France', *French Historical Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1. (Spring, 1989), pp. 4-27; J. Dewald, *The European Nobility, 1400-1800* (Cambridge, 1996); C. Fairchilds, *Women in Early Modern Europe 1500-1700* (Harlow, 2007); J. Lukowski, *European Nobility in the Eighteenth Century* (Basingstoke, 2003).

⁴³ Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 106-113.

the Glorious Revolution'.⁴⁴ The same could be said for the Union but this statement fails to represent the reality of Scottish politics ca.1700. Although a considerable amount of work on Scottish women exists, noblewomen in the period 1688 to 1710 have yet to be the subject of a significant study dedicated to re-assessing their political involvement.⁴⁵ The politicisation of noblewomen in England in the eighteenth century has received far more scholarly attention. The survival of some particularly rich archival resources for elite women has allowed examination of individual noblewomen's roles and also the study of women within wider family groups and networks.⁴⁶ The new perspectives which have emerged on female politicisation concern mainly English noblewomen in the eighteenth century but these present a useful model for assessing the political activity of Scottish noblewomen here.⁴⁷

Examining the variety of roles that Scottish noblewomen created for themselves in this period reveals a level of informal political activity at work in Scotland which has previously received only scant attention.

⁴⁴ Schwoerer, 'Women in the Glorious Revolution', p. 196.

⁴⁵ K. von den Steinen, 'In Search of the Antecedents of Women's Political Activism in Early Eighteenth Century Scotland: the Daughters of Anne, Duchess of Hamilton', in E. Ewan and M. M. Meikle (eds.), *Women in Scotland c 1100-c 1750* (Edinburgh, 1999), pp.112-122; Rosalind Carr has included a chapter on the politicisation of three noblewomen as part of her broader thesis on masculinity, gender and national identity, see Carr 'National Identity and Political Agency in Eighteenth Century Scotland', unpublished PhD thesis (Glasgow, 2008); Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*; M. Craig, *Damn' Rebel Bitches The Women of the '45* (Edinburgh, 1997); L. Leneman, *Alienated Affections: The Scottish Experience of Divorce and Separation 1684-1830* (Edinburgh, 1998); R. K. Marshall, *The Days of Duchess Anne, Life in the Household of the Duchess of Hamilton 1656-1716* (East Linton, 2000); Ewan and Meikle, *Women in Scotland*; Brown, *Noble Society*; M. M. Meikle, *A British Frontier? Lairds and Gentlemen in the Eastern Borders, 1540-1603* (East Linton, 2004); S. Nenadic, *Lairds and Luxury The Highland Gentry in Eighteenth Century Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2007); K. Barclay, 'Negotiating Patriarchy: The Marriage of Anna Potts and Sir Archibald Grant of Monymusk, 1731-1744', *Journal of Historical Studies*, 28, 2, (2008); E. Ewan and J. Nugent (eds.), *Finding the Family in Medieval and Early Modern Scotland* (Aldershot, 2008).

⁴⁶ In addition to the work of Chalus and Eales see also, S. Kingsley Kent, *Gender and Power in Britain 1640-1990* (London, 1999); K. Gleadle and S. Richardson (eds.), *Women in British Politics, 1760-1860: The Power of the Petticoat* (Basingstoke, 2000). More general studies encompassing political women include, A. Foreman, *Georgiana, the Duchess of Devonshire* (London, 1998); S. Tillyard, *Aristocrats: Caroline, Emily, Louisa and Sarah Lennox, 1740-1832* (London, 1992); S. Whyman, *Sociability and Power in Late Stuart England: The Cultural Worlds of the Verneys, 1660-1720* (Oxford, 1999); R. Weil, *Political Passions: Gender, the Family and Political Argument in England 1680-1714* (Manchester, 1999); R. O'Day, *Cassandra Brydges (1670-1735) First Duchess of Chandos* (Woodbridge, 2007).

⁴⁷ In her introduction Chalus recognises the, 'distinct parliament and political culture', of Ireland and called for an examination of Irish political women in their own right. The same is equally true for Scottish political women, Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 2-20.

III

It is the primary aim of this thesis to explore the lives of particular Scottish noblewomen during this important era in a bid to redefine Scottish female political activity. Understanding the abilities and roles of Scottish noblewomen within political families requires a shift in focus from the male dominated formal political roles which have hitherto been central to political history.⁴⁸ Comprehending how noblewomen pursued their own religious, economic and political aims in an era which suffered severe hardship alongside trade and financial problems is a central theme. The reasons why union came about and the resultant loss of Scottish independence have been debated and contested over many years. The role played by parliamentarians, courtiers, lawyers and churchmen, as well as the force of wider public opinion, have all been well documented and yet the role of noblewomen has hardly been touched upon and, as yet, forms no real part of historical understanding.

Those historians who have failed to include noblewomen in political histories have not fully appreciated their role and position in the family. Anne, Duchess of Hamilton (1632-1716), a noblewoman with an almost unique position as matriarch of the most powerful Scottish family, has been referred to in political histories but only in a marginal way.⁴⁹ Duchess Anne inherited in her own right, she understood and protected

⁴⁸ M. Stacey and M. Price, *Women Politics and Power* (London, 1981), pp.10-11; Schwoerer, 'Women in the Glorious Revolution', pp. 196-197; Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 1-20.

⁴⁹ Rosalind Marshall has provided a valuable account of the life of Duchess Anne but does not explore her politicisation although the Duchess remains the most referred to noblewomen within Union historiography due to her political activity see Marshall, *Duchess Anne*; Riley, *Union*, pp. 11-12; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 47-48; MacInnes, *Union and Empire*, pp. 274-275. R. K. Marshall,

her family's wealth, position and legacy and also understood what roles her son, the fourth Duke, would have had to fulfil. Rosalind Carr recognises Duchess Anne's position of power as the mother of the leader of the opposition to union but argues that the Duchess accepted had to accept that she, 'required her son to represent the family interest', which is true.⁵⁰ Carr's overall argument carries the implication that because the Duchess attempted to 'manage' her son's political career she was conceding that she herself could not carry out this role personally. However, Carr's argument implies that the Duchess actually wanted this formal political role for herself. This interpretation stimulates a key question: do we have evidence that noblewomen wished to undertake a formal political role only open to, very few, men? My own research has not yet found that view expressed in words which would suggest the contemporary ideology, referred to by Carr, was actively motivating noblewomen in this period.⁵¹ Did noblewomen want a similar role to men? Did they envisage that?

In order to redefine female political activity it is important to understand what motivated noblewomen to engage with state affairs and politics. While nobles' attendance at parliament can be traced, their voting patterns examined and their speeches and addresses all analysed the same sources and clues to political thinking do not exist for noblewomen. In many ways their interests were much the same as noblemen's: duty, family interest, money and gaining wealth and estates through positions and preferment. Nobles could be motivated and influenced by religious issues or by Jacobitism and, of course, some had a clear political will based on firm ideology,

'Hamilton, Anne, suo jure duchess of Hamilton (1632-1716)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), online edn, October 2006 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12046>, accessed January 2012]

⁵⁰ Carr studied sources relating to Duchess Anne, her daughter Katherine, the Duchess of Atholl and Lady Katherine's sister-in-law, Lady Katherine Murray, see Carr, 'Female Correspondence and Early Modern Scottish Political History, a Case Study of the Anglo-Scottish Union', in *Historical Reflections*, Vol. 37, No. 2. (Summer, 2011), pp. 39-57.

⁵¹ Schwoerer concludes that women in the Revolution were not demanding political rights, Schwoerer, 'Women in the Glorious Revolution', p. 197.

principles and beliefs. In this men and women were surely not so different. The general impression from the sources used here is one of female duty, to husbands usually, but, more importantly, to the family. Letters do not suggest noblewomen discussed issues of political emancipation or any level of equality for women.

Acknowledging the differences between male and female sources, however basic that might appear, needs to be kept in mind when using noblewomen's sources. Letters may not always plainly state what noblewomen wanted or expected in terms of politics but they aid our understanding of what we already know based on male political activity in the period. By exploring the family roles and life experiences of noblewomen we can construct an accurate impression of female political activity. This activity has to be situated in the broader context of women's entire lives. Viewing noblewomen's political involvement as separate from their other activities achieves little. Karl von den Steinen adopted this approach when searching for evidence of noblewomen engaging in the politics of the union and failed to positively identify the, 'antecedents of female political activism'.⁵² His emphasis was on searching for a contemporary ideal, political activism, as the motivating factor for wives and sisters of union politicians. The inability to reconcile these ideals with the sources is clear from the work of von den Steinen and Carr and this suggests a necessary change in emphasis. Female 'political activism' was not part of a noblewoman's life experience or even something she considered in an abstract way: it was beyond her comprehension.

Politics is defined as the activities or affairs of government, politicians or a party. It refers to a set of political beliefs or principals and it can also refer to the methods of managing a state or government.⁵³ To include noblewomen effectively historians have

⁵² von den Steinen, 'Women's Political Activism', pp. 112-122.

⁵³ Although dealing with an earlier period Brown gives a useful overview of the relationship between the nobility and political power, K. M. Brown, *Noble Power in Scotland from the Reformation to the Revolution* (Edinburgh, 2011), pp. 1-34.

to resist viewing politics and family life as being in two different spheres with the, ‘private or domestic sphere’, being the only area open to women, and so removing them from political life.⁵⁴ The family life of noblewomen, as we will see, involved them in the wider household and estate but could include finance, management and legal affairs necessary to the family interest. The female role of instructing and educating children afforded women the freedom to develop their religious views and so engage with these at a local level.⁵⁵ The economic situation was one which noblewomen had to understand in order to manage the household and estate. This meant that the politics of the economic situation were also something women had to consider. Their grasp of politics was not limited to dissemination of information. Although this was a vital role in itself, political awareness and knowledge allowed them to become trusted advisors and confidants with some noblewomen actively involving themselves in elections. Including all these roles and responsibilities broadens the scope of what noblewomen could achieve within areas of activity traditionally seen as domestic or private.

Our view of women and politics means acknowledging much more than general family life being interspersed with occasional political activity.⁵⁶ To understand noblewomen as political creatures we need to examine their entire lives, not pick out the political as unusual. This thesis will argue that there was a level of political awareness and involvement in the many roles noblewomen assumed. It is most evident

⁵⁴ Scholars argue that understanding women’s political activity means extending the definition of what constitutes political action beyond formal politics in the public sphere as outlined by Jurgen Habermas whose separate spheres ideology was at the height of popularity in the late 1970s, see Innes and Rendall, ‘Women Gender and Politics’, pp. 43-45; Stacey and Price, *Women, Power and Politics*, pp. 4-11; Schwoerer, ‘Women in the Glorious Revolution’, p. 196; Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 3-5. A fuller study exists for English women, see A. Vickery, ‘Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women’s History’, *The Historical Journal*, 36, 2, (1993), pp. 383-414.

⁵⁵ Schwoerer suggests a link between noblewomen’s educational ability and the Bible arguing that study of the Bible enabled women both to hone writing skills and also to think and freely express themselves based on piety, see Schwoerer, ‘Women in the Glorious Revolution’, p. 204.

⁵⁶ von den Steinen concluded that Lady Katherine only became politicised because her husband came under extreme pressure politically and he assumed Susan, Countess of Dundonald was not politically active at all because she was widowed and had less opportunity for involvement. Both views are reassessed here, see von den Steinen, ‘Women’s Political Activism’, pp. 120-122.

in their attempts to secure patronage and favours and in overt political behaviour such as electioneering. However, politics was at times a pervasive, less tangible part of women's lives. It is apparent in their awareness of the power of sermons to circulate political news and opinions so their activities in placing ministers within parishes shows their involvement in the politics of religion. Politics were driven by economic issues related to trade, investment, taxation and the effects of European war, among other things, and all of these had to be considered by noblewomen not just men. If all of these impacted on a noble family then a noblewoman, engaged on behalf of the family interest, was to some degree a political player.

A crucial point in arguing for the inclusion of noblewomen within political history is that historians should explore the whole of a politician's life rather than examining only his public political role.⁵⁷ For those seeking to uncover the role of Scottish noblewomen in relation to politics the argument that we too should operate within the widest possible framework is compelling. Elaine Chalus has acknowledged the, 'personal and familial nature', of politics in the eighteenth century and her research is focused on noblewomen who had access to politics because of their connections to the minority of men who made up the political elite.⁵⁸ The same is true for Scottish noblewomen. The political elite were a small group who shared family relationships and connections of kinship and enjoyed their access to power due to noble status. Just like English women Scots noblewomen were active family members within this small

⁵⁷ Whatley suggests broadening the scope of study by proposing a longer timeframe and reassessing previously accepted source material, as does MacInnes by suggesting the importance of viewing union in the broadest context of Empire, see Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 34-61 and MacInnes, *Union and Empire*, pp. 1-11. Extending the usual parameters of Revolution and the Union to include women is advocated by both Schwoerer and Whatley, see Schwoerer, 'Women in the Revolution', pp. 196-197; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 35, 288 and 334-335.

⁵⁸ M. Stacey and M. Price, *Women Politics and Power* (London, 1981), pp. 2-5; Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 77-97.

elite and they were often the important, physical links between the dominant political families.

Noblewomen

Confining this study to noblewomen in a pre-union context is restrictive. Union historiography has, until recently, tended to be situated in a time frame which begins around 1701. Christopher Whatley has argued that elongating the timeframe to include the Revolution period is vital as a considerable number of men involved in the Revolution were still involved in negotiating the Union years later.⁵⁹ He has drawn attention to the principled nature and behaviour of some politicians and has demonstrated that exploring the ideology of these men is possible using a long term examination of their lives and experiences. This challenges the notion of the Union being a 'political job'.⁶⁰ Adopting this longer time frame here allows noblewomen's lives from the Revolution of 1688 until 1710, beyond the Union, to be fully explored. Tracing noble lines back through the years of the Great Civil War and the Restoration has important implications for understanding the development of Scottish noblewomen's autonomy throughout the seventeenth century and into the next.⁶¹ However, a far longer timeframe has been avoided as beyond the possibilities of this

⁵⁹ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp, 40-42.

⁶⁰ The idea of a 'parcel of rogues' has held sway for a variety of reasons, particularly by those with a nationalistic view. Whatley challenges this approach, see Whatley and Patrick, 'Persistence, Principle and Patriotism', pp. 162-186. See also P. H. Scott, 'An English Invasion would have been worse: Why the Scottish Parliament accepted the Union', *Scottish Studies Review*, Vol. 4, No. 2. (Autumn, 2003), pp. 9-16; P.H. Scott, *Towards Independence, Essays on Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1991).

⁶¹ Keith Brown has illuminated the importance of earlier periods, see K. M. Brown, 'The Scottish Aristocracy, Anglicization and the Court, 1603-38', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 36, No.3 (September, 1993), pp. 543-576; Brown, *Noble Society*. This thesis should add to understanding of what kind of power noblewomen could wield, particularly whether they could do more or less than in previous periods, and also allow for consideration of Jacobite women in later periods and whether they were similarly effective and acted with autonomy. See M. McGrigor, *Anna, Countess of the Covenant* (Edinburgh, 2008); M. Macaulay, *The Prisoner of St Kilda* (Edinburgh, 2009); Craig, *Rebel Bitches*.

study although the history and background context of some noblewomen will be expanded upon as this can help us understand their position and experience.

The sample of noblewomen for this thesis has been based on a list of noblemen who attended the Scottish parliament between 1689 and 1707.⁶² 103 Scottish noble families had representatives in parliament at least once during this period. From this list it was possible to collate sufficient data on the members of 110, including full names, titles, birth and death dates and marriages. The same details have been collated for children and children's marriages.⁶³ The number of noblewomen that can be determined as being of an age to participate in the household and family life, whether married, unmarried or widowed, from within these families during the period 1688-1710, is 349. Identifying all of these women has proved difficult and source material relating to the majority of them does not exist. Forty-four noblewomen have been identified here as having relevant surviving source material of sufficient quality to justify their inclusion within the subsequent chapters.⁶⁴ Although this is a fraction of the total identified it does cover women within a wide range of noble status and as such can be considered as the most broadly inclusive study of noblewomen in this period to date. A full list of the noblewomen who make up this sample is included. (See appendix 1)

⁶² National Archive of Scotland [NAS] GD1/14/14 Print-out of analysis of attendance of members of the Scottish Parliament, 14 March 1689-25 March 1707.

⁶³ The list has only been the starting point for my counting. Some family names appear twice on the list and to allow for fathers and sons to be accounted for these have been included in one family here. For example the name Hamilton includes both the third and fourth dukes. The fourth duke's brothers, the earls of Selkirk, Ruglen and Orkney also feature under the Hamilton name. Orkney and another brother, Lord Basil Hamilton, do not feature on the list but have been part of the counting as have their wives.

⁶⁴ Most of the initial counting was based on information contained in the *Scots Peerage* and then, where possible, dates and details were checked and information augmented by other resources such as family histories. *The Scots Peerage* does present difficulties in terms of reliability but in the absence of any other means to substantiate women's details it remains useful as a basic point of reference, see J. Paul, *The Scots Peerage Volumes I-IX* (Edinburgh, 1904-1914).

Sources

A significant issue when examining the actions and participation of noblewomen within family life is that rarely do complete collections of source material for Scottish noblewomen survive. The lack of sources means that finding material pertaining to politically engaged noblewomen is limited and then, as it is so incomplete, drawing broad conclusions becomes difficult. Very few of the surviving sources left by noblewomen contain overt or unrestrained opinions on political matters and the people involved. In fact, Scottish female authors in this period were rare and no existing political texts can be attributed to noblewomen in the pre union era.⁶⁵ However, it would be wrong to assume that the lack of surviving evidence means noblewomen did not hold strong views and opinions. It is difficult to believe that everything opinionated, controversial or just spirited that was written by noblewomen has been destroyed and enough evidence does survive to suggest that women could and did write in this way.⁶⁶ Some noblewomen will feature here more than others. For example, the source material of Katherine, first duchess of Atholl, is one of the most complete collections and includes letters between her and her husband, her siblings, the wider family and kin networks. She also wrote a spiritual diary and various religious writings and as her life falls squarely within the time period this makes her an ideal case study in every chapter. Attempts have been made to expand upon prime examples, such as the Duchess of Atholl, by making comparisons with other noblewomen where possible. Being able to gauge whether noblewomen were behaving in a similar way to their contemporaries is

⁶⁵ E. Breitenbach, 'Curiously Rare? Scottish Women of Interest or the Suppression of the Female in the Construction of National Identity', *Scottish Affairs* (Winter, No, 18, 1997); L. Abrams, 'Gendering the Agenda', in Abrams et al, *Gender*, pp. 1-16.

⁶⁶ Letters which exist in edited collections have been noted and David Mullan provides transcriptions of significant religious texts by women, see D. G. Mullan, *Women's Life Writing in Early Modern Scotland Writing the Evangelical Self, c.1670-1730* (Aldershot, 2003).

important. However, acknowledging differences in personal abilities and interests is equally significant.

The sources used here are mainly the personal letters of Scottish noblewomen found in collections within the National Archive of Scotland [NAS] and from the collection at the Blair Castle Archive [Blair MS]. Material from these collections relates to the period 1688-1710. Understanding the epistolary conventions and reading noblewomen's surviving letters with attention to their self representation is a crucial part of this thesis.⁶⁷ Their letters indicate how they personally manoeuvred within patriarchal society, sometimes delicately circumventing constraints and at other times wilfully subverting the patriarchal order.

Status of Noblewomen

By 1700 the Scots population was around one million. The great nobles who dominated society constituted a tiny percentage of the population and held offices in government and controlled political power. Although women, 'might inherit and hold wealth and transact economically', they were in general, 'subordinated both in custom and in law'.⁶⁸ Noble status was signified by the ownership and occupation of land and the hereditary nature of the wealth, status and privilege this granted. Lineage was equally significant as, 'it lay at the heart of noble self-consciousness', and highlights the importance of detailed genealogies to authenticate noble standing.⁶⁹ Scottish noble

⁶⁷ The importance of letter writing has been the subject of work by James Daybell, but this again pertains to English women, see J. Daybell (ed.), *Early Modern Women's Letter Writing* (Basingstoke, 2001) and J. Daybell, *Women Letter-Writers in Tudor England* (Oxford, 2006).

⁶⁸ D. M. Walker, *A Legal History of Scotland Volume IV The Seventeenth Century* (Edinburgh, 1996), pp 15- 17.

⁶⁹ H. M. Scott and C. D. Storrs, 'The Consolidation of Noble Power in Europe, c.1600-1800', in H. M. Scott and C. D. Storrs (eds.), *The European Nobilities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, Volume I Western and Southern Europe* (MacMillan, 2007).

houses were in constant flux, rising and falling, with some families dying out and others emerging, a phenomenon similar to European counterparts.⁷⁰ Noble status in Scotland was complex, encompassing lairds to dukes and rank and position can be compared with other European countries.⁷¹ Noble status had a fluid nature and this adds to the difficulty of making clear definitions and calculating numbers.

Brown highlights the distinctions between the levels of Scots nobility and also warns that Scottish nobility, 'was not simply the parliamentary peerage', an error some historians have made by appropriating the English model.⁷² This concern is echoed by Stana Nenadic who points out that the term 'laird' causes difficulties when comparisons arise with the English understanding of the word 'gentry'.⁷³ Nenadic is highlighting a problem in work on Scottish nobility which means terms relating to class are readily defined but can be difficult to assign to women.⁷⁴ For example the 'gentry' status of Highland families is defined by Nenadic as a life led exclusively within the Highlands devoid of travel, a first language of Gaelic with competent English spoken as necessary and a practical, daily routine of running household and farm.⁷⁵ This is a useful definition but it does not include all highland families and excludes most lowland ones. Lady Katherine Hamilton moved from a lowland noble family into the Highland family of Atholl but this does not mean her Murray of Atholl relatives could be defined in the way Nenadic suggests. Her mother-in-law was the daughter of the seventh earl of Derby and his wife, Charlotte de la Trémoille, while one of her sisters-in-law was Katherine

⁷⁰ Dewald, *European Nobility*, pp.17-19.

⁷¹ For example in Spain where status ranged from *hidalgo* to *caballero* to *grandee*, see I. A. A. Thomson, 'The Nobility in Spain, 1600-1800', in Scott and Storrs, *European Nobilities*, pp. 191-255.

⁷² Brown, *Noble Society*, p. 11.

⁷³ Nenadic, 'Experience and Expectations', pp. 201-220.

⁷⁴ Julian Goodare points out a laird or lord may not have had a title but may have owned land and commanded men, see Goodare, *State and Society*, p. 57.

⁷⁵ Nenadic, 'Experience and Expectations', p. 202. Goodare sets out clear definitions of lairds, lords and nobles but his work relates to men and does not specify how title and status changed for women either on the elevation of their father or after marriage. For example a woman born into a lairdly family may have had no formal title but if her father ascended to the status of earl from being a laird or lord then distinctions of title become less clear for related women, Goodare, *State and Society*, pp. 56-59.

Skene, the twice widowed daughter of a merchant, John Skene of Halyards. This demonstrates the range in status, even within families, was diverse. The women in this thesis, unless otherwise stated, during the period 1688-1710, were all members of the titled nobility either from birth or through marriage. Referring to them as noblewomen relates to the fact that they were titled and had the rights and privileges that this entailed. Some were regarded as higher status than others and where distinctions in wealth, position and status are necessary these have been provided.

In addition to title and status the rights and legal issues facing seventeenth century noblewomen are not easily distinguished from non-noble women.⁷⁶ It seems difficult to place the legal position of someone like Duchess Anne within the constraints which affected non-nobles. A significant issue relates to how the Duchess ensured her son and heir's place in the Scottish parliament by resigning her titles in his favour in 1698. Her actions at this time allowed her son to represent the family in parliament but the legal requirements were glossed over by Rosalind Marshall, who merely describes the Duchess as, 'making the necessary legal arrangements'.⁷⁷ This was surely not a straightforward legal issue, particularly as the Duchess did not relinquish her estates or retire as a dowager. The impression is one of a singularly powerful noblewoman using complex legal knowledge and expertise to carry out these wishes.

The legal situation of Duchess Anne was possibly unique, given her high status, but clarifying noblewomen's legal position and status suggests some broader questions which may impact on the political activities and our understanding of noblewomen at this time. If they understood and operated within patriarchal society, and were generally compliant with its constraints, then what does this suggest about female education and

⁷⁶ Walker provides comprehensive information on women's legal status but does not deal with noblewomen separately and the same is true of other scholarly work on legal issues. Walker, *Legal History of Scotland*, pp. 16-17 and L. Leneman, *Promises, Promises* (Edinburgh, 2003); W. Coutts, 'The Evidence of Testaments and Marriage Contracts', in Ewan and Meikle, *Women in Scotland*, pp. 176-186.

⁷⁷ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p. 216.

knowledge of the law? In 1697 Lady Katherine wished to protect her status as daughter of a duke. To achieve this she required her husband to petition the monarch in order to preserve her rights.⁷⁸ This was particularly important in the event of her being widowed. The value she placed on her own status, and also the legal implications, are clear from her correspondence. She involved her family in applying sufficient pressure on her husband to ensure he obtained this privilege for her. This example highlights a noblewoman's knowledge of the law and awareness of her own status and, in this case, her ability to achieve what she desired. Given that Marshall argues that the daughters of Duchess Anne were only educated, 'to run a household, keep accounts and display a variety of social accomplishments', this evidence of legal knowledge might be the tip of what Zoe Schneider calls, 'the hidden iceberg of judicial activity',⁷⁹ within the female nobility of Scotland. If this applies to legal knowledge then it may also be extended to include finance, economics and politics for a significant number of noblewomen.

Method

The inclusion of women in Scottish history has been widely promoted and debated and great advances have been made in the field.⁸⁰ Lynn Abrams insists that although adding the experiences of women 'into the mix' is a 'necessary first step' it by no means makes a complete gendered analysis. This means also considering how gendered expectations and socially constructed impositions on behaviour and conduct affected

⁷⁸ Blair MS 29.I.(9).4 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Holyrood House] 6 January 1697 and Blair MS 29.I.(7).29 Earl of Tullibardine to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Whitehall] 28 January 1697.

⁷⁹ Z. Schneider, 'Women before the bench, female litigants in Early Modern Normandy', *French Historical Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 1, (2000), pp. 1-32.

⁸⁰ J. W. Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York, 1988); J. Hendry, 'Snug in the Asylum of Taciturnity: Women's History in Scotland', in I. Donnachie and C. A. Whatley (eds.), *The Manufacture of Scottish History* (Edinburgh, 1992), pp. 125-142; Breitenbach, 'Curiously Rare?' pp. 82-94; Abrams, 'Gendering the Agenda', pp. 1-16.

both men and women.⁸¹ The intention here is to explore, as broadly as possible, the lives and experiences of noblewomen and so provide a fuller picture of noble life in relation to both men and women. As this study deals with noblewomen it is important to clarify the issues of patriarchy and status as these were essential to noblewomen.⁸²

The restrictions on how noblewomen behaved, what they involved themselves in and how they operated have to be understood as central to their lives: patriarchy was an accepted, fundamental value. The careful balancing of the female roles of advisor, confidant and manager within marriages and family life was complicated by external social constraints prompting appropriate female behaviour.⁸³ However oppressive the male dominance of this period might appear to some historians, and gender and feminist scholars give particular attention to the oppression of women, we cannot read every female source as a subversive challenge to the patriarchal control of men.⁸⁴ Source material illuminates how noblewomen balanced their roles and negotiated their independence but a desire for equality or female liberation does not emanate from their surviving written words. In unravelling the complexities of family life and relationships, as far as is possible from personal correspondence, it is hoped this thesis will demonstrate the independence and freedom some noblewomen could attain.

The acknowledgment of status is another matter of interpretative importance because status is crucial to understanding the differences between noblewomen and other women. Duchess Anne lived and died by her status. It defined her; it defined her husband and impacted on her marriage. Her family lived through it and by it and it

⁸¹ Abrams, 'Gendering the Agenda', pp. 1-16.

⁸² Keith Brown argues that exploring the private lives of nobles' relationships should provide a 'holistic' view of noble society, not just the lives of women, and stresses the importance of acknowledging gender constraints but also understanding how high status females could circumvent these issues within a patriarchal society, Brown, *Noble Society*

⁸³ Brown, *Noble Society*, pp. 138-140; Chalus, *Political Life*, p. 13.

⁸⁴ Stacey and Price, *Women, Power and Politics*, p. 2; Schwoerer, 'Women in the Glorious Revolution', p. 197; Barclay, 'Negotiating Patriarchy'.

provided her with opportunities not available to the majority of noblewomen, never mind women in general. To refer to her as merely Anne Hamilton in writing her history obscures her and diminishes our understanding of this noblewoman.⁸⁵ If we wish to reintroduce the women that history has passed over then we should hardly wish to disregard a fundamental aspect of their lives. Status is a key issue in this thesis. How noblewomen understood their status, what it meant to them and most importantly how they wielded it are crucial.

It is also important to be aware of how status changed over time. Noblewomen shifted from being young and inexperienced to being wives and mothers and, if they were fortunate, they developed useful skills in marriages which changed and adapted over time, just as they did. It is vital to bear in mind the constant personal changes life demanded and care has been taken here to avoid labelling women or defining them because of what we know about their lives as a whole. In examining letters from 1688 it is important to bear in mind that noblewomen then did not know what their later letters of 1707 would reveal to be their choices or decisions. When dealing with a specific incident or period there is more value in considering the various pressures and influences on noblewomen rather than an outcome they could not foresee. It is easy to say Lady Katherine was a staunch Presbyterian or Lady Nairne a committed Jacobite. They were. They were also daughters, sisters, mothers and wives and these roles alone, never mind manager, administrator or political advisor made them what they were and that was more than simply being Presbyterian or Jacobite. It is the uncertainty of the female life experience which this thesis aims to convey, the possibilities and

⁸⁵ Rosalind Carr fully acknowledges status as being integral to understanding elite women in political life but removes the full title of elite women included in her work, see Carr, 'National Identity and Political Agency'. Derek Patrick warns of a 'dehumanising' effect if all we see is title alone when dealing with elite society so a balance must be found, see Patrick, 'People and Parliament', p. 83.

opportunities women encountered and most importantly not what we can say they were but how they achieved this.

Chapters

The first three chapters deal with areas of family life most commonly regarded as the private or domestic domain of women. Chapter one will describe in detail the sample of noblewomen used in the thesis. Exploration of marriages reveals the networks of kin, a crucial support system which noblewomen helped to create, maintain and utilised in pursuing the family interest. The ties that bound the group of families who formed the main part of the *squadron volante* will be examined here. These connections were formed over a number of years and it was the influence of related, widowed women who shaped the lines of inheritance. The shared experiences of these related families may have shaped the political group that emerged after 1702 but understanding how noblewomen contributed to this grouping illustrates that family interest and connection was just as important as principle and ideology. Noblewomen could provide a vital link connecting the main political families, a position which allowed them to mediate between powerful political players and exploring what motivated them most powerfully is a recurring theme in each chapter.

The second chapter builds on the theme of marriage and encompasses wider family relationships by examining the letter writing of Scottish noblewomen. Exploring noblewomen's epistolary culture demonstrates in further detail the way kin networks functioned. This chapter touches briefly on female education but is not intended to provide detailed literary analysis women's writing. Being aware of the language and formulaic methods of letter writing noblewomen used reveals important aspects of

noblewomen's self representation. This is particularly important in relation to how elite women challenged, subverted, or merely circumvented, the constraints of patriarchy. In doing so they could gain the freedom to operate within spheres of expertise normally reserved for men.

The third chapter examines the religiosity of noblewomen and attempts to gauge how belief affected some noblewomen and so influenced their actions, behaviour and even their political choices. Exploring noblewomen's piety, comparing it with others, determining how important a factor it was within marriage and how it related to the wider family has important implications when attempting to measure female influence. The religious writings of Katherine, Duchess of Atholl, provide a unique insight into the private religious experience of a woman who was considered highly devout by her contemporaries. Using this material presents difficulties as reliance on one source places limitations on drawing broader conclusions but its value as evidence of a singular religious experience justifies its inclusion. Lady Katherine believed her opposition to the Union was God-given and this chapter will explore whether her strength of faith had an important impact on the political behaviour of her husband.

The final three chapters shift focus from the personal lives of noblewomen to their engagement in the more public areas of noble life. The fourth chapter deals with the role of noblewomen in managing the family estate and household. The purpose here is not to depict the domestic roles and duties of noblewomen on the estate but to grasp the enormity of what fell into noblewomen's remit when they actively engaged with business. Revealing their knowledge of legal issues and financial matters as well as their general interest in land, farming and trade is important. However, the purpose here is to explore their business capabilities within a pre Union context and understand how taxation, legislation and relations with England, which suffered at this time, impacted

on the decisions of women as managers. Noblewomen could be regarded as important and trusted business partners by their husbands. As this indicates once more how a patriarchal society did not completely restrict women from something as male as serious business management it raises questions about what other activities noblewomen could engage with almost independently.

Chapter five builds on the theme of noblewomen's independence as business partners and managers by exploring their patronage activity. How they requested favours, what kind of positions and office they wanted and how this influenced the career choices of husbands and sons are all important aspects of noblemen's lives. If a man could be inclined to specific actions by his father or brother then a determined wife or mother could be equally influential. Noblewomen's ability to act as a mediator or facilitator is most apparent in their patronage activity and the intrinsic nature of politics with patronage provides a clear impression of their political tendencies.

Chapter six addresses both subtle and overt political activity on the part of noblewomen. Their dissemination of political news and information is explored here as is their role as reporters, which demonstrate much more than merely providing a secretarial service for husbands and fathers. Their detail and knowledge of politics did not spring from a vacuum and letters demonstrate the depth of their involvement in areas previously considered exclusively male. A case study of particular significance relating to the role of the Duchess of Atholl in the elections in 1702 is used here. Sources relating to this aspect of noblewomen's lives are extremely rare. The experience of Lady Katherine is valuable because the material which survives provides evidence of her behaviour and activity and as such is hugely informative on both what was possible even if not quite the norm. Drawing on her experience allows us to discern that similarly interested and capable women, using their autonomy and

influence could be engaging in a form of social politics which has been for too long obscured by the focus on formal, male political activity.

In a period which started with a revolution and ended with the loss of Scottish independence it is extraordinary that Scottish noblewomen have not been the subject of a study devoted to exploring their reactions, roles and opinions. This thesis will reveal the possibilities and the realities of what noblewomen could and did achieve during an era of economic and political upheaval for Scotland.

Chapter 1

Marriage

In November of 1694 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton wrote to her son and heir concerning his intention to marry for the second time. James Hamilton, Earl of Arran (1658-1712), had firstly married Lady Anne Spencer (1666-1690) in 1688 and although the bride had shown more sorrow than joy on her wedding day the match proved unexpectedly happy.¹ Lady Anne fell deeply in love with her new husband and proved to be sensible, supportive and caring and her attitude helped Arran overcome his misgivings about matrimony.² However, their happiness was short lived. Lady Anne suffered complications following the birth of their second daughter and died aged twenty four after only two and half years of marriage. Although Arran was initially distraught he left his little daughter with his mother and returned to London and a new lover, Lady Barbara Fitzroy.³ By 1694, William, third duke of Hamilton, was dead and Duchess Anne wanted the Hamilton heir to remarry. Indeed the whole family was pressed into persuading him to find a wife, return to Scotland and assume his position as the representative of the Hamilton family interest. Marriage was a vital part of fulfilling these family obligations.

¹ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 177-188; R. K. Marshall, 'Hamilton, James, fourth duke of Hamilton and first duke of Brandon (1658-1712)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004) online edn, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7898>, accessed January 2012].

² Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp.177-188.

³ The couple's first daughter had died and Lady Barbara Fitzroy bore Arran a son within a year of his leaving Scotland, Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p. 188.

With her son's duty in mind Duchess Anne set out what kind of wife she expected him to find. She first of all hoped that he would, 'seek God in everie thing [as this] is the best way to be happily dired' .⁴ She instructed him, 'not to think of the knight Marshals daughter', commenting that she was amazed he was considering this match, 'knowing how mad the father was'.⁵ She confessed that of two other possible brides, 'I incline most to E[arl] Rochesters daughter for tho there may not be much diferece betwne her blood and Mrs Cruis [Lord Crewe's daughter] yet the alaih [alliance] that family has made will make a vast deference'.⁶ Her greatest concern however was that as soon as he was married he was to return home or, 'I should never consent to the match or any other', declaring, 'those [brides] that will not come to Scotland is not for you'.⁷ She further suggested to him that he, 'should make sune choise of a verteous person', and her son continued with various negotiations, eventually dismissing two potential brides as they were unwilling to move to Scotland. Duchess Anne had been correct in noting this as a concern when dealing with English families and money was a significant issue throughout all negotiations. Arran always wanted more and his mother always refused. Duchess Anne was forceful on this point, knowing that she was not about to settle any more money on her son. When pressed by him she stressed, 'if you had the whole estate [it] would not afourd you and an English wife to live high in England so I must return to my old opinion that a Scots wife is by far the preferablest where you may live

⁴ NAS GD406/1/6659 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, to Earl of Arran [Hamilton] 5 November 1694.

⁵ NAS GD406/1/6659 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, to Earl of Arran [Hamilton] 5 November 1694; Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p. 212; Paul, *Scots Peerage, II*, p. 207. Duchess Anne was referring to Henrietta Villiers (d. 1720), daughter of Sir Edward Villiers, Knight – Marshal (1620-1689). She actually married John Campbell, second earl of Breadalbane (1662-1752) in 1695. Her sister was Elizabeth Villiers who would later marry Arran's brother Lord George Hamilton.

⁶ NAS GD406/1/6659 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, to Earl of Arran [Hamilton] 5 November 1694.

⁷ NAS GD406/1/6659 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, to Earl of Arran [Hamilton] 5 November 1694.

comfortably in what you have and pay yr debt by degrees as yr father and I did before you'.⁸

Arran finally announced that he had entered into negotiations with the Gerard family as he wished to marry Elizabeth Gerard (d. 1744), sole child and heiress of Digby Gerard, fifth Baron Gerard of Gerard's Bromley (1662-1684) who owned considerable estates in England.⁹ Duchess Anne responded with enthusiasm but references to religion, virtues and any personal characteristics of the bride did not feature heavily in her letter. She merely noted that the bride came from 'a good family' but it was the fact that she would provide, 'such a fortune is what I am very glad of and hartely wishes a speddy accomplishment to the match'.¹⁰ Duchess Anne's letter to Arran reiterated her concerns over finance and set out that the, 'tayly [tailzie/entail] made in your favers dose sofeshently impower you to give a jointer', and she assured him, 'what is settled on you is above what its named to be'.¹¹ Hinting that he would eventually inherit more than he imagined was designed to appeal to Arran's greed and encourage the match. She reminded him that all that she was doing, particularly the extensive and highly expensive rebuilding of Hamilton, was for his benefit and, 'demonstrates my concierne for the caire of my family'.¹² She even suggested that her, 'aige and afflictions are such as gives ground to think I shall not live long to stand in the way of your full possessing the whole estate'.¹³ Duchess Anne knew that constant debates over marriage and money with her son were necessary as she struggled to exert some influence over him and have him return to Scotland to fulfil his role as fourth duke. He queried the suitability of the family jointure property at Kinneil and Duchess Anne headed off his rash notions of

⁸ NAS GD406/1/6661 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, to Earl of Arran [Hamilton] 3 December 1694.

⁹ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 212-215.

¹⁰ NAS GD406/1/6696 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, to Earl of Arran [Holyroodhouse] 21 April 1696.

¹¹ NAS GD406/1/6696 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, to Earl of Arran [Holyroodhouse] 21 April 1696.

¹² NAS GD406/1/6696 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, to Earl of Arran [Holyroodhouse] 21 April 1696.

¹³ NAS GD406/1/6696 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, to Earl of Arran [Holyroodhouse] 21 April 1696.

actually living on the remote Isle of Arran by announcing that it would be, 'very unfit for an English lady'. Her son always exaggerated his poor financial position and complained it was obstructing his marriage negotiations. Duchess Anne was not fooled and smoothly reassured him that when he was duke, 'you will have that interest with your wife to sell her estate in England and purchas some plesent place neer Edinburgh for a jointer house', for the family.¹⁴ These family negotiations continued in much the same way over several years but when Arran finally married Lady Elizabeth in 1698 the Duchess fulfilled her side of the bargain and resigned her titles in his favour. She retained her own position as Duchess of Hamilton and remained in full control of the household and estates but her son styled himself fourth duke of Hamilton and represented the family in the Scottish Parliament.¹⁵

Duchess Anne was a staunch Presbyterian who intended that the marriages of her daughters should bring them personal happiness.¹⁶ The first marriage of the Hamilton son and heir was fortunate to result in a happy if short lived marriage, but this was not a prerequisite when the 'cold, calculating match' was negotiated.¹⁷ His second match was equally calculating, with the bride's fortune and the financial terms causing most concern as well as Arran using the negotiations to attempt to extort more financial benefits from his mother. Compatibility and marital happiness was not a priority. Financial security and status dictated the terms of marriage for any son and heir and in most cases personal happiness, love and affection would have been secondary to family interest.

Duchess Anne's other sons also created difficulties for their mother. Lord George caused outrage in the family for secretly entering into a marriage with a former mistress

¹⁴ NAS GD406/1/6738 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, to Earl of Arran [Hamilton] 6 June 1696.

¹⁵ The resignation of her titles was not carried out lightly and the whole family was involved in Duchess Anne's decision and making the necessary legal arrangements, see, Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p. 216.

¹⁶ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p. 147.

¹⁷ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 147 and 184.

of King William. Duchess Anne wrote to Arran about Lord George's conduct saying that it was, 'like [to] be the last letter ever he shall have from me if he be so determined as you write'.¹⁸ This was a clear warning to Arran not to emulate his brother's behaviour. The marriage prospects of another brother, Lord Archibald, also suggest that money, rather than character, carried more weight. All Archibald noted regarding a prospective bride's character was that her, 'person is well enough considering ye disadvantages of dress and want of seeing ye world', but negotiations fell through when he found out that her fortune had been misrepresented.¹⁹ Archibald went to sea instead.

Marriage in Early Modern Scotland.

Parents negotiated marriages with a view to furthering family interest, forging political links, maintaining and promoting economic interests as well as potentially strengthening or promoting religious connections.²⁰ Marriage between noble families reinforced their status and position. Parents may well have wanted a happy marriage for their children, like Duchess Anne, but achieving this and also making appropriate connections were not always compatible. The continued importance of kinship within Scottish society, at least until the beginning of the eighteenth century, highlighted the need for family alliance through arranged marriage.²¹ Formidable connections and vital support networks can be discerned through careful unravelling of the complex family relationships within noble

¹⁸ NAS GD406/1/6689 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, to Earl of Arran [Holyroodhouse] 26 November 1695.

¹⁹ NAS GD406/1/6972 Lord Archibald Hamilton, to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton [Barntoun] 7 January 1699; NAS GD406/1/6980 Lord Archibald Hamilton, to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton [Edinburgh] 20 January 1699; NAS GD406/1/6982 Lord Archibald Hamilton, to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton [London] 8 April 1699.

²⁰ Brown, *Noble Society*, pp. 113-116.

²¹ Meikle, *A British Frontier?*; Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, pp. 63-65.

families.²² However, the roles of noblewomen within the marriages of the major Union politicians have rarely been fully explored by those pursuing political history.²³

Identifying what was expected of a noble wife and how noblewomen operated within marriages can reveal how women supported their menfolk in terms of family interest and political careers. Noblewomen developed a complex network within the wider family and in some cases this meant creating and sustaining political alliances. This chapter will explore the ties of kin so often referred to as binding the political players of the period.²⁴

A noble wife needed to be modest, restrained and pious as well as properly educated for her status.²⁵ She needed the necessary housekeeping skills required for managing a large household and supporting a husband in his career.²⁶ The education of noblewomen stressed the importance of refined accomplishments such as music, dancing and artistic pursuits but would also have included reading and writing.²⁷ Studying arithmetic in order to record household and personal accounts was a particularly important accomplishment.²⁸ The military and political responsibilities of noblemen meant long absences from home. Accordingly, the need for wives who could manage both household and estates appears to have been a greater consideration than the need for refined accomplishments and quiet obedience.

²² Brown, *Noble Society*, pp. 113-136; R. Reddington-Wilde, 'A Woman's Place: Birth Order, Gender and Social Status in Highland Houses', in Ewan and Meikle, *Women in Scotland*, pp. 201-210; Meikle, *A British Frontier?*, pp. 9-45.

²³ Riley, *Union*; Ferguson, *Scotland's Relations*; Whatley, *Scots and Union*; K. Bowie, *Scottish Public Opinion and the Anglo-Scottish Union, 1699-1707* (Suffolk, 2007) and Watt, *Price of Scotland*.

²⁴ Riley, *Union*, pp. 11-19; K. M. Brown, 'The Origins of a British Aristocracy: integration and its limitations before the treaty of Union', in S. G. Ellis and S. Barber (eds.), *Conquest and Union Fashioning a British State 1485-1725* (London, 1995), pp. 222-249; Brown, 'Scottish Aristocracy', pp. 543-576; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 249.

²⁵ Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, pp. 64-66; Fairchilds, *Women in Europe*, pp. 55-79; O. Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her, A History of Women in Western Europe* (London, 1997), pp. 134-172.

²⁶ Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, pp. 64-66

²⁷ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 146-147.

²⁸ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p. 146; R. Scott-Moncrieffe, *The Household Book of Grisell Baillie* (Edinburgh, 1911) see also, M. Plant, *The Domestic Life of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century* (Edinburgh, 1952) and H. and K. Kelsall, *Scottish Lifestyle 300 Years Ago* (Aberdeen, 1986).

Historians have recognised that women as wives, despite the, ‘rhetoric of obligation and subordination’, could, in private, be partners.²⁹ They could also be counsellors and advisors to their husbands, providing support and guidance while being careful not to overstep patriarchal constraints. Knowing when to demonstrate acceptable feminine conduct and remain within the bounds of male authority was a method of both negotiating and subverting contemporary social restrictions.³⁰ This is evident in studies of later eighteenth century noblewomen where the wives of the political elite, with enhanced social possibilities, acted similarly.³¹ If the actions of supportive and involved wives could be, ‘interpreted in light of traditional female roles’, such as the female helpmeet then they were welcomed but if noblewomen, ‘were perceived to step out of this character’, and operated in an excessively influential way then they posed a threat.³² Scottish noblewomen in the Revolution to Union era operated within similar boundaries, mindful of the constraints upon them but equally able to subvert them. The correspondence between husbands and wives from this period reveals a contemporary understanding and acceptance of marriage as a working partnership. Exploring marriages within the major noble families of this period will demonstrate noblewomen’s abilities to work in partnership and help us to determine what was acceptable female behaviour. Even so, some marriages show a lack of parity and understanding between couples. Acknowledging the differing styles and levels of understanding within marital partnerships can clarify why some noblewomen involved themselves in areas outwith their areas of responsibility, such as politics, and others did not.

The idea of early modern marriages being built on a level of equality and parity has been explored elsewhere. Elaine Chalus refers to the relative freedom of English women

²⁹ Lukowski, *European Nobility*, p. 169.

³⁰ Brown, *Noble Society*, p. 139; Chalus, *Political Life*.

³¹ Chalus, *Political Life*, p. 13.

³² Chalus, *Political Life*, p. 13.

to operate socially and politically in the later seventeenth century but Keith Brown also refers to marital equality when assessing noble life in the early part of the century.³³

Studies on European noblewomen also acknowledge and discuss parity in relationships and many of these studies bring into question our perceptions of a strict patriarchal society suppressing the effectiveness of noblewomen.³⁴

Uncovering the parity in Scots noble marriages and acknowledging it more fully is needed to gain a clear idea of what noblewomen could achieve. Crediting men with all formal political or state activity might be technically accurate but there are discrepancies between what scholars perceive to be in the remit of men and what actually overlaps into areas of activity where women could have influence. Disregarding the ability of noblewomen to shift between the artificially created male and female spheres of activity not only conceals what women could do but it places the emphasis on individuals. These individuals, usually men, have been the focus of political history. Examining marriages and close relationships emphasizes the reality that men were not acting alone but were operating as part of large families and households, all of which included women.³⁵ This may be an obvious statement but exploring the role of Scottish noblewomen in relation to family interest, management and political life means women have to be included as fully functioning family members.³⁶

³³ Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 36-38; Brown, *Noble Society*, pp. 140-142.

³⁴ Studies which question perceptions of early modern patriarchal society oppressing the abilities of women cover various time periods and countries, including, N. R. Tomas, *The Medici Women: Gender and Power in Renaissance Florence*, (Aldershot, 2003); J. M. Lanza, *From Wives to Widows in Early Modern Paris: Gender, Economy and Law* (Aldershot, 2007); S. Tarbin and S. Broomhill, (eds.), *Women, Identities and Communities in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot, 2008).

³⁵ A. Laurence, 'Real and Imagined Communities in the Lives of Women in Seventeenth Century Ireland: Identity and Culture', in Tarbin and Broomhill, *Women, Identities and Communities*, pp. 13-27.

³⁶ Chalus, *Political Life*, p. 19.

Marriage: frequency and origins.

Attempts by Scottish nobles to enhance their status, estates and wealth through marriage can be investigated by examining marital trends within families. A sample of 110 families, drawn from a list of noble families which had a representative in the Scottish parliament between 1689 and 1707, forms the basis of this investigation. 110 men are counted as the head of each family within the period 1688-1707. As these include brothers from within the Hamilton and Atholl families then the number of fathers counted is only 107. The heirs in the sample families, who were not necessarily the biological sons, only number 108 as the Kenmure and Tarras families cannot be accounted for.³⁷ These figures determine how many times men in the period 1688-1707 married and how this compares with the previous generation, their fathers, and the subsequent generation, their sons or heirs.

This analysis of my sample families indicates that the vast majority of men in the period between 1688 and 1707 (90%) married, a significant number (21%) married twice and a few (5%) married three times or more. (see table 1.1).

³⁷ I have counted fathers, not the previous title holder to give the clearest indication of generational change. The title of the head of the family was either newly created or derived from a parent or brother in all but five of the sample families, e.g. in the Torphichen family the head of family in my period was James, seventh lord (d. 1753) and his father was John, fourth lord Torphichen (d. 1637). Two older brothers, the fifth and sixth lords, died in 1649 and in 1696 respectively. In this instance I have counted the father as he was the previous generation. In six families the title came from the mother but I have still counted the father and not the previous title holder as this could mean including men from earlier generations. Only in five families, Bellenden, Sutherland, Sinclair, Rutherford and Ruthven does the title jump from another male relative and in these cases I have still counted the biological father to avoid counting men from previous, earlier generations. All family members have been included in family database tables to determine the number of related women.

Table 1.1 Frequency of marriage in three generations of 110 Scottish noble families.

	Married once	Married twice	Married three times or more	Never Married	Total no. of men counted	Total no. of marriages made
Head of family, 1688-1707	71	23	6	10	110	137
Previous generation	84	14	4	5	107	126
Son/heir	76	4	2	26	108	90

Analysis of the geographic origins of the brides reveals two broad trends. First, that in all three generations the majority of marriages were Scottish. In the sample families 78% of marriages were to Scottish brides and this was matched by the sons or heirs (78%) in the following generation. Of the earlier generation i.e. the fathers of the men within my sample, a greater number (93%) made Scottish marriages. In this generation there were also significantly fewer English matches (4%) and Irish or Dutch marriages only account for 1% of the total. However the men in subsequent generations increased their connections as a second trend emerges from 1688 onward as marriages with English brides account for 16% of the total for the men in my sample. Their sons or heirs made a similar increase of 16%. Both of these groups also made more marriages with either Irish or Dutch brides as these account for around 4% of marriages in the period of 1688 to 1707 and beyond.³⁸ (see table 1.2)

³⁸ Keith Brown has researched Scottish noble marriages prior to Union and concludes that in the period 1603 -1707 a minority of Scots peers made ninety-six Anglo-Scottish marriages, the rate being greatest before 1642 and at its lowest between 1642 and 1660 with only a gradual increase after 1660, see Brown, 'Origins of a British Aristocracy', p. 227.

Table 1.2 Geographical origins of brides.

Number of marriages made by each generation	Number which were Scottish	Number which were English	Number which were Irish or Dutch
137 (head of family)	108	23	5
126 (previous generation)	118	6	2
90 (sons or heirs)	71	15	4

It would appear from the sample that the noblemen attending parliament during this period either had only a moderate interest in expanding their dynastic ambitions outside of Scotland or, as is more likely, same –status English matches were not financially realistic for many noble families.³⁹ The numbers for Irish and Dutch marriages are very small but give an indication of some factors affecting nobles such as exile or military careers. Marriages were predominantly Scottish and while there is a modest increase in English marriages there is no obvious evidence that impending union was compelling Scots to consider and pursue an English match.⁴⁰ Although this chapter will consider some Scots-English alliances the objective here is to examine the dominant pattern in Scottish family alliances post Revolution and up to the Union.

³⁹ Brown highlights the fact that the, ‘overwhelming majority of Scottish noblemen’, did not spend much time in London as it was, ‘too far from their estates and interests’, and above all too expensive and wives and children rarely accompanied husbands, see Brown, ‘The origins of a British Aristocracy’, pp. 235-237.

⁴⁰ Searching for the origins of a British aristocracy, integration and anglicization of the Scots nobility Brown argues that interracial marriage had the potential to overcome prejudice and ignorance between Scotland and England in the period before Union, something which had also been mooted in the reign of James VI. Brown concludes that the Scots aristocracy, ‘retained a very strong attachment to their own national identity’, and that the preservation of Scots law, education and the Kirk meant that Scots elite culture did not, ‘roll over and die’, in 1707. Brown quotes the Duchess of Buccleuch in 1720 summing this up succinctly by claiming that her ‘Scotts hart is the same I brought to England and will never chang’, see Brown, ‘Origins of a British Aristocracy’, pp. 239-249.

Six families within the sample made, what I have termed, Irish marriages. This indicates that the brides were from families which held Irish titles. While this definition suffices here, as it makes a reasonable distinction for counting purposes, it is an oversimplification. Jane Ohlmeyer provides a useful overview of the difficulties of understanding and defining those who lived or settled in Ireland.⁴¹ Anne Laurence also acknowledges the debate on Irish identity but also points to a lack of sources for women in early modern Ireland. Defining what it meant to be Irish is uncertain when a lack of evidence makes it, 'difficult to learn what individual family members thought about who they were'.⁴² These issues of identity are important as they impact on what can be said here about the very small percentage of marriages between Scots and Irish nobility. Trying to establish whether Scots nobles were actively seeking Irish heiresses or Irish titles to augment their standing in Scotland, or as a process of British assimilation, needs further work and, of course, these are not the only explanations for marriages.⁴³ However, a brief examination of the marriages here- there were just six - suggests some tentative conclusions.

John Hamilton, sixth earl of Abercorn (1661-1734) married Elizabeth Reading (1668-1754), only daughter of Sir Robert Reading, first baronet of Dublin (d. 1689) in 1684. Her mother, Jane Hannay, was the Dowager Countess of Mountrath.⁴⁴ It is difficult to verify where exactly Elizabeth was born or lived and also difficult to ascertain where she met Abercorn. His Irish connections are much easier to uncover as his grandfather, James Hamilton, first earl of Abercorn (d.1618), was 'highly esteemed' by James VI, 'called to Parliament in Ireland' by James and was considered a, 'very

⁴¹ J. Ohlmeyer, 'Seventeenth Century Ireland and the New British and Atlantic Histories', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 104, No. 2 (April, 1999), pp. 446-462; Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English*.

⁴² Laurence, 'Real and Imagined Communities', pp. 13-27.

⁴³ Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English*, pp. 352-355.

⁴⁴ Paul, *Scots Peerage, I*, pp. 47-59.

energetic colonist'.⁴⁵ The sixth earl served as an Irish MP in 1692 and 1695 for County Tyrone and succeeded to the title of Abercorn in Scotland and Baron Strabane in Ireland in 1701. As an Irish privy councillor he was in Dublin between 1701 and 1703 but he also attended the Scottish parliament in 1704 and ratified the Union in 1707.⁴⁶ Irish marriages and connections were developed from the time of the first earl onwards. Abercorn's marriage is understandable and appears to be consolidating and expanding existing connections and associations.

John Hamilton, second lord Bargany (d. 1693) married Lady Alice Moore (d. 1677), daughter of Henry, first earl of Drogheda (d. 1676) and Alice Spencer (1625-1696). She had been previously married and was the Dowager Countess of Clanbrassil when she married Bargany. This was also his second marriage and only lasted a year, as they married in 1676 and she died in Dublin, suggesting her residence there, in 1677. Bargany's first marriage was a Scots one. He wed Lady Margaret Cunningham (d. 1670), daughter of William Cunningham, ninth earl of Glencairn (1610-1665) in 1662. Bargany has been accused of marrying Lady Alice primarily for, 'her ill-gotten gains under her first husband's will' but because of her sudden death, and his absence from Dublin, he was, 'denied his inherited claims'.⁴⁷ Bargany gained little through this alliance although it could be surmised he sought this wife for her connections, title and money.

Three further marriages were actually connected to the Bargany match. William Ramsey, third earl of Dalhousie (d. 1682) married Lady Alice Moore's sister, Lady Mary (d. 1726). It is unclear how this match came about and the Dalhousie family had

⁴⁵ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, I, pp. 47.

⁴⁶ S. Handley, 'Hamilton, James, sixth earl of Abercorn (c.1661–1734)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004) online edn, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12091>, accessed May 2012]

⁴⁷ P. Hopkins, 'Hamilton, John, second Lord Bargany (c.1640–1693)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford University Press, 2004) online edn. [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12106>, accessed May 2012]

no obvious Irish connections such as those which are evident in the Abercorn family.⁴⁸ Lady Mary outlived Dalhousie and then made a second marriage to John Bellenden, second lord Bellenden (d. 1707) in 1683. Again this family had no previous Irish connections up to that time. It is likely that Lady Mary married Bellenden because she was a widow living in Scotland rather than being sought as a bride with Irish titles or wealth. However, she would have brought Irish connections at least to the Bellenden family.

The third marriage related to Bargany was the marriage of William Boyd, second earl of Kilmarnock (1684-1718). Kilmarnock married Leticia Boyd (d. 1676), daughter of a merchant, Thomas Boyd of Dublin, in 1682 and the shared name could suggest some earlier family connection. However Kilmarnock's father, William, the first earl (d. 1692) had married Jean (n.d.), eldest daughter of the ninth earl of Glencairn. She was the sister of Margaret who married Bargany as his first wife making Kilmarnock brother-in-law to Bargany and so this match connects these families in an earlier generation. That Bargany went on to make a second Irish marriage and that Kilmarnock's son also married an Irish woman is probably coincidental as there is no obvious connection between the brides but links within noble families often created more possibilities for further alliances.

The Marchmont family were the only other family in the sample to arrange an Irish marriage when Patrick Lord Polwarth (1664-1709) married his relative Elizabeth Hume (d. 1701) of Castle Hume in Ireland in 1697. She died of consumption and he married a second, Scots, wife in 1703.⁴⁹

This brief analysis of six families who made Irish marriages suggests two conclusions regarding marriages between Scots and Irish nobles. The first is the

⁴⁸ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, II, pp. 70-75.

⁴⁹ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, p. 16; Warrender, *Marchmont*, pp. 54-56.

difficulty of defining what Irish actually means. The Abercorn family were essentially ‘colonists’ c. 1600, that is, their Irish connections inevitably grew thereafter but then so too did their links with related English families. It is probably more accurate to refer to the Irish branches of the family as Anglo-Irish which suggests the holder of the Scottish Abercorn title and estates was well connected in both England and Ireland.⁵⁰ Since Abercorn also challenged the Hamilton family in their claim to the French dukedom of Chatelherault they clearly understood their position as a noble family was not confined to Scotland.⁵¹

The second conclusion is that without knowing the details of where nobles met their brides or how these marriages were arranged it is difficult to ascertain whether Scots nobles were actively seeking brides with Irish, or Anglo-Irish, titles and connections. It would also seem that an Irish bride was not necessarily found in Ireland. However, all the marriages here do suggest some intention to create opportunities of family expansion outwith Scotland. Abercorn’s marriage is understandable given his wider connections but his bride could just as easily have been an English heiress. Bargany may have wanted to secure his bride’s wealth and title which suggests his marriage was driven by these considerations but again a similarly well endowed Scots or English widow might also have provided him with these assets. Not knowing how the marriage of Dalhousie came about is frustrating but it certainly led to the second marriage of Bellenden. This suggests that chance and the social circles nobles moved in were just as significant in determining a choice of marriage partner as title or wealth, especially in a second marriage. The Kilmarnock marriage could have come about for any number of reasons and without knowing the Boyd connection to a Dublin merchant it is difficult to ascertain the details of this marriage. Marrying a merchant’s daughter

⁵⁰ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, I, pp, 47-59.

⁵¹ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 141 and 197.

could not be considered as enhancing Kilmarnock's title or bringing him new estates although it is possible she was wealthy. The Marchmont match occurred because of family connections relation and would have consolidated these associations.⁵²

The various reasons for these marriages encompass all the considerations influencing noble marriage: wealth, title, estates, and increasing their standing and power. Apart from the Abercorn marriage there is little to distinguish these marriages from other marriages except that the brides all held Irish titles. Abercorn was building on existing connections and also undertook an Irish parliamentary career which the other five families did not. The wealth and status of Irish brides varied but the same is true for Scots and English brides, so it is difficult to see a distinct trend or pattern towards favouring Irish noblewomen as suitable brides emerging in these few examples. Overall the very few examples of Irish marriage confirm that Scots nobles almost always married within the Scottish elite. The very few exceptions suggest a small minority of Scots did have a more inclusive attitude to marriage within the three kingdoms.

A Good Wife

A successful marriage stemmed from mutual understanding, shared attitudes and trust between couples. A joint conviction about the importance of family interest also boosted parity in relationships. Marriage negotiations focussed on the financial aspects including the dowry or tocher, money which the bride brought to the marriage, and the jointure or terce, the provision a husband made to secure his wife's future in the event of his death.⁵³ The conditions agreed not only supported a wife if her husband died but

⁵² Warrender, *Marchmont*, p. 55.

⁵³ Walker, *Legal History of Scotland*, p. 655; Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, pp. 28-29.

might also enhance her prospects of making a second marriage.⁵⁴ When Lady Katherine Hamilton married Lord John Murray in 1683 her family provided a dowry of 40,000 Scots merks (£2222 sterling) which he used to pay debts. The agreed jointure property was Huntingtower Castle near Perth.⁵⁵ Murray was given more land from his family to support his new wife and, as heir, subsequently received further property as well as being granted new titles by the monarch.⁵⁶ It also fell to Lord Murray and his wife to support other family members. Aided by Lady Katherine he helped secure positions and regimental posts for his brothers. His younger brother, Lord Mungo, felt stifled by their parents' control and fled to Huntingtower to live with his brother and Lady Katherine. Murray hoped his father could, 'pass this easily over', as Mungo had wearied of not having, 'imployment or a certane way of living'.⁵⁷ Finding a suitable role in life was a common problem for younger sons and other members of the family also asked Murray, as heir, for help. Even his disgraced sister Charlotte requested his financial support for herself and her children although she waited until after their parents' deaths before contacting him.⁵⁸

Good marriages provided benefits for both families. Lady Margaret Nairne (d. 1747) as sole heiress to her father, Robert, first lord Nairne (1620-1683) brought the Nairne title and property to her marriage with Lord William Murray (1664-1726) thus enhancing his status and also bringing the related property under Atholl management.⁵⁹ Love and compatibility could often be secondary considerations as arranged marriages

⁵⁴ Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, p. 30.

⁵⁵ R. K. Marshall, 'Hamilton, Katherine, duchess of Atholl (1662-1707)'. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford, 2004) [<http://oxforddnb.com/view/article/70530>, accessed 3 Feb 2009].

⁵⁶ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, pp. 182, 199 and 379.

⁵⁷ Lord Mungo found adventure by being appointed captain of one of the expeditions which sailed to Darien but lost his life there in 1700, see, Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 459.

⁵⁸ Atholl, *Chronicles*, II, pp. 38-39.

⁵⁹ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, pp. 393-396; P. Hopkins, 'Nairne, William, styled second Lord Nairne and Jacobite first earl of Nairne (1664-1726)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004); online edn, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19729>, accessed 5 Oct 2010].

frequently hinged on wealth and the property brides would bring.⁶⁰ John Campbell, first earl of Breadalbane (1634-1717) was noted for his expansionist policy in the north of Scotland and made advantageous marriages with the basic purpose of securing more land.⁶¹ Noblewomen were not merely pawns in these marital transactions as other noblewomen i.e. mothers, female relatives and certainly widows negotiated terms fiercely to secure the best deal.⁶² What is clear from these negotiations is that noblewomen were aware of their own worth and wanted to secure good terms but crucially they related this to furthering family interest.

Exploring marriages made within the sample of families has meant some consideration of the role of women in lineage and inheritance. In twenty three of the sample families the line of succession up to this period was continued through a female in the family. This was either through a noblewoman inheriting in her own right or her husband taking on her family name and title. The fusion of families, the cementing of

⁶⁰ The recent study on marriage and patriarchy by Katie Barclay gives an in-depth analysis of courtship and arranged marriages with Barclay first acknowledging debates about love, family interest and personal choices. Barclay concludes that there was, 'no simple decline of the family in favour of the individual', in Scottish society and that although, 'courtship was a time to negotiate the economic terms of marriage', the, 'emphasis of bilateral kinship in the seventeenth century meant both husband and wife represented the resources of the family', and this indicates, 'a partnership, albeit with authority vested in the male', see K. Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power: Marriage and Patriarchy in Scotland, 1650-1850* (Manchester, 2011), pp.70-96; Jane Ohlmeyer also stresses the importance of what a wife could bring financially to the marriage while recognising the other immediate concerns of producing an heir, social connections or possibilities to further patronage or political associations, see Jane Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English*, pp. 337-338.

⁶¹ P. Hopkins, 'Campbell, John, first earl of Breadalbane and Holland (1634-1717)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), online edn, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4512>, accessed 29 Sept 2010]; Paul, *Scots Peerage, II*, pp. 204-209.

⁶² Barclay argues that women, in negotiating the economic terms of marriage, were also active in determining the, 'terms of their married life', although marriage was primarily, 'an economic relationship and practical considerations remained central to a successful match', see Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power*, p. 95; Susan, Countess of Dundonald arranged her own second marriage, see NAS GD406/1/6773 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, to the Earl of Arran [Hamilton] 8 July 1697; NAS GD406/1/6818 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran [Edinburgh] 16 June 1695; NAS GD406/1/6420 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran [Holyroodhouse] 28 February 1697; NAS GD406/1/7567 Lord Basil Hamilton, to Earl of Arran [Holyroodhouse] 30 March 1697; NAS GD406/1/6422 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran [Holyroodhouse] 18 March, 1697. The Dowager Lady Lovat failed in her attempts to manage the marriage of her daughter and secure the family inheritance and was also disastrously linked with Simon Fraser of Beaufort in the 'Lovat Scandal' in which he abducted and was accused by her family of forcibly married her although some believe she was not initially unwilling. Other women in the family eventually arranged the marriage of the young Lady Lovat, see Atholl, *Chronicles, I*, pp. 390-452.

links, the forging of ties and the interchange in connections and associations are practically immeasurable. Noblewomen were at the heart of this key aspect of marriage.

The patriarchal nature of family life in early modern Scotland meant that, like England and other European countries, Scotland implemented the practise of primogeniture. The Scottish tailzie or entail was a charter established to secure perpetual succession in the male line and was often designed to prevent female succession. These long, carefully worded documents were often regarded by contemporaries as overly complex but this was the favoured manner of clarification.⁶³ Noblewomen were not the only ones to be marginalised. In the absence of a male heir a successor could be chosen from other branches of a noble family, especially if this was considered more likely to secure the future of the line, rather than allowing a lesser branch to inherit even if this had been their right.⁶⁴ In this way some men were treated similarly to noblewomen so exclusion was not a uniquely female experience.

The nature of these documents ensured the preservation of succession to the male line but this also upheld the rights of heirs and so could create difficulties over parental control and authority.⁶⁵ The Earl of Breadalbane's second marriage contract was made with provisions for both his son and future stepson upon their own marriages and illustrates cooperation between father and children.⁶⁶ Some fathers altered their entail and succeeded in having daughters carry on the family line but this was when no viable male heir was available. Tracing back family lines of inheritance can illuminate the situation of noblewomen and the responsibilities that fell to them over many generations. The actions of earlier generations of women had an impact on the survival

⁶³ Ohlmeyer argues that these documents became ever more complex and, like Keith Brown, highlights their survival in archives as indicative of their significance, see Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English*, pp. 339-340 and Brown, *Noble Society*, pp. 33-36; Coutts, 'Testaments and Marriage', pp. 176-186; See also Walker, *Legal History of Scotland*.

⁶⁴ Brown, *Noble Society*, p. 35.

⁶⁵ Brown, *Noble Society*, p. 36.

⁶⁶ Paul, *Scots Peerage, II*, pp. 204-205.

of noble families within the sample used here. This is worth exploring before establishing what was expected of noblewomen c.1688-1707 as the actions of previous women should not be underestimated in the power they had to influence later generations.⁶⁷

Analysis of the Annandale family reveals James Johnstone, first earl of Annandale (1625-1672), changed the entail of his title, reflecting his intention that daughters in the family should inherit. His marriage in 1645 to Henrietta Douglas (1633-1673), daughter of the first marquis of Douglas, was childless for the first six years and then four daughters were born in quick succession.⁶⁸ His son, the second earl, was eventually born in 1664; the seventh of eleven children whose elder brother had already died in infancy so his father's concerns were understandable.⁶⁹ Although Annandale eventually did produce a son to inherit he still made arrangements to allow for the continuance of the family line through the women.

Alexander Leslie, second earl of Leven (1637-1664), was another earlier generation nobleman who only had daughters and also made arrangements to, 'resign his honours in favour of the heirs male whom failing the heirs female', of his body.⁷⁰ Although he died before a re-grant of the honours was completed his daughter Margaret (d. 1674) did inherit in her own right. Her guardian, the earl of Rothes, quickly proposed a match between his ward, Lady Margaret, and his own nephew, Francis Montgomery of Giffen. Lady Margaret saw through this and wrote to an aunt that she believed it was Rothes',

⁶⁷ Duchess Anne was raised by her paternal grandmother and this woman has been recognised as having a major influence on the young heiress, Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 20-23. Powerful or particularly independent women did not always influence future generations but it is worth noting their ability to inspire.

⁶⁸ The *Scots Peerage* states that Lady Henrietta was only thirteen years of age when they married which is noted as 'very young' and may account for some years passing before children were born, Paul, *Scots Peerage*, I, p. 263.

⁶⁹ D. Adamson, 'Johnstone, William, first Marquess of Annandale (1664-1721)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), online edn, [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14970, accessed 1 Oct 2010]; Fraser, *Annandale Book*.

⁷⁰ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, V, pp. 378-379.

‘desyr to get him this fortune and me to dy’, and that she would consider her future carefully as she would not, ‘weaken the family my great grandfather got at the pryce of his blood.’⁷¹ Lady Margaret was delicate and had been advised that bearing children would be dangerous for her health but the pressure exerted on her by Rothes was too much. She relented and signed the marriage contract in 1673 but died a year later after childbirth, just as she had predicted. Her sister Catherine then inherited and a legal battle ensued over whether Margaret’s marriage had been enforced.⁷² Catherine, also of delicate health, did not marry and after her death in 1660 the title devolved to her cousin David Melville, third earl of Melville and second earl of Leven (1660 -1721).⁷³ The sisters’ legitimate worries over enforced marriage demonstrate their understanding of status and their intention not to be used as pawns. Their experience is illustrative of noblewomen’s pride in family honour and lineage. Even so, their situation demonstrates how noblewomen without family protection could fall prey to the pressure exerted by influential and powerful men. Both of these women may have had the right to inherit but their youth and delicate health were factors outwith their control and left them unable to secure the family line.

Robert Ker, second earl of Lothian (d. 1624), also found himself without male heirs and made arrangements to allow the titles and land to pass to his daughters, but added explicit instructions that they married someone with the Ker name. His daughter Anne (d. 1667) fulfilled the conditions of her father’s settlement and married William Ker of Ancrum (1605-1675). As she was heiress to one branch of the family, the Kers of Newbattle, this marriage expanded the family estate because he was heir to another branch of the family, the Kers of Ferniehirst. Her marriage consolidated family

⁷¹ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, V, p. 379.

⁷² Paul, *Scots Peerage*, V, pp. 378-379

⁷³ David third earl of Melville and second earl of Leven was an active supporter of the Union, a commissioner in 1706 and was one of the sixteen parliamentary representatives voted for after Union, see Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, pp.111-113.

connections and her husband was created third earl of Lothian in 1631, the year of their marriage, securing and strengthening the line for subsequent generations.⁷⁴ Although Anne Ker was styled Countess of Lothian the actual legal right to the title was never verified but her marriage did guarantee the family name and title endured.⁷⁵

A similar situation is found in the Nairn family as Robert Nairn, first lord Nairn only had one surviving child, Lady Margaret Nairn. A contract was drawn up in 1676 proposing marriage between her and Lord George, youngest son of the Marquis of Atholl. Lord George would assume the Nairn name and title upon marriage. Unfortunately he developed health problems and the contract was annulled with a new contract in 1690 allowing another Atholl son to marry Margaret instead. Lady Margaret and Lord William (1664-1726) were married in 1690, the year before Lord George died.⁷⁶ These arrangements, especially the Nairn example where the intended groom's death was anticipated and the contracts altered accordingly, appear rather mercenary. The need to manage the marriages of future generations in the absence of sons suggests a tremendous level of control over the lives of noblewomen. In many instances sons had no more choice than daughters. This lack of choice, the loss of agency and the absence of love might all be assumed as the unhappy lot of a dutiful daughter constrained by patriarchy. However, the Lothian and Nairne marriages noted here did not end in separation or divorce nor were they deemed unhappy by contemporaries.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, V, pp. 458-474.

⁷⁵ Lady Anne Ker was the mother of Robert, first marquis of Lothian (1636-1703), a Union commissioner in 1702 and she was grandmother to William, the second marquis, who inherited upon his father's death in 1703. The title included the names Ancrum, Jedburgh and Newbattle among others, see Paul, *Scots Peerage*, V, p. 477.

⁷⁶ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, pp. 393-396; P. Hopkins, 'Nairne, William, styled second Lord Nairne and Jacobite first earl of Nairne (1664-1726)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004); online edn, [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19729, accessed 5 Oct 2010].

⁷⁷ Marriages which did end in divorce or legal separation are noted in the *Scots Peerage*, although some unhappy marriages are merely overlooked in family histories, for example the marriage of William Johnstone, second marquis of Annandale and Sophia Fairholm ended in separation but this is omitted from the family history and the *Scots Peerage*, see Fraser, *Annandale Book*, pp. ccxiv and Paul, *Scots Peerage*, I, p. 268. The Nairne marriage is referred to in both the *Scots Peerage* and the *Chronicles of*

Whether there was little choice in obeying the wishes of parents the continuation of the family line was as important to noblewomen as it was to men. Their understanding of their role and status suggests that rather than helplessly submitting to arranged marriages they actively engaged with the process. Securing the family line ensured the prospects of everyone within the family, not just men. Primogeniture was ‘virtually universal’ and entails, ‘commonly established perpetual succession in male lines’.⁷⁸ However, the idea that this actually created a clear male line in every family is brought into question when we find that 21% of the families in the sample do not demonstrate this. The chances of any family boasting a clearly defined male line over generations is remote. A noblewoman who had the right to inherit but who did not marry would signal the family’s demise. Anne Ker fulfilled her father’s wishes, so too did Lady Nairn and while their own sentiments on this may not always survive their behaviour in complying is testimony to their perpetuating this system. Noblewomen did not interfere with the law of inheritance and there is no evidence that they wished to promote a system to treat daughters similarly to sons. Evidence that noblewomen negotiated matches, stipulated conditions and arranged their children’s marriages in line with patriarchy implies a clear understanding of family values. Their behaviour suggests an acceptance of social values, a respect of contemporary legal principles and an important role which many noblewomen embraced.

Match Making.

Atholl and Lady Nairne has been commended for securing her husband’s release after his involvement in the ’15 Rebellion and although this is not a reliable indication of love and fidelity any unhappiness in her situation is not alluded to at all, see Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, pp. 394-395. Anne Ker’s marriage to William Ker in 1631 is described without any reference to unhappiness but their joint retirement and burial on the family estates suggests their thirty year marriage was mutually happy, Paul, *Scots Peerage*, V, p. 470.

⁷⁸ Brown, *Noble Society*, p. 34.

The qualities which noblemen prized most highly in wives were based on religiosity and piety and virtue were two of the most frequently mentioned characteristics of good wives.⁷⁹ The tributes husbands paid their wives after death were particularly descriptive of devotion, pious living and a noblewoman's ability to strive to do her all for her husband and the family.⁸⁰ Putting others before herself and educating the children she bore in the Christian faith was essential for noblewomen although individual levels of piety and devotion would certainly have differed. It is arguable that in grief many husbands overstated the religiosity of much missed wives and, in stressing the piety of their wives, other equally important qualities may have been overlooked. Letters of advice from parents to children stress the importance of religion in daily lives and in arranging marriages but what was desirable in theory did not always appear compatible with reality.⁸¹

Duchess Anne was instructed in her father's last letter to her, and in her uncle's will, to marry a nobleman of, 'the reformed Protestant religion', with explicit instructions that should her husband, 'fall from the true Protestant religion', he would forfeit all rights to the Hamilton estates.⁸² In fact she married a Roman Catholic, Lord William Douglas, earl of Selkirk (1634-1694), whose father was in constant trouble with the local presbytery and whose mother was labelled 'a notorious papist'.⁸³ Nevertheless

⁷⁹ Barbara Murison suggests the importance of deathbed testimonies and inscriptions, see Murison, 'Lapidary Inscriptions', pp. 99 -112. Family histories often relate the tributes families made to deceased relatives, for some examples see, Lindsay, *Lives of the Lindsays*; W. Fraser, *Memorials of the Montgomeries Earls of Eglinton* (Edinburgh, 1859); W. Fraser, *The Earls of Cromartie: Their Kindred, Country and Correspondence, Volume I* (Edinburgh, 1876); Fraser, *Annandale Book*; Stanhope, *Memoirs*; W. Wilson, *The House of Airlie Volume II* (London, 1924).

⁸⁰ D. G. Mullan, 'Parents and Children in Early Modern Scotland' in Ewan and Nugent, *Finding the Family*, pp. 73- 83.

⁸¹ The example of Duchess Anne referred to previously supports this and although clear in what she expected from her sons' marriages her heir did not comply, nor did Lord George. In the Atholl family a bride chosen for Lord Mungo Murray could not be persuaded to accept him and incurred her parents' wrath, much to his consternation. His affection for her meant not wishing to bring, 'their displeasure upon her', and the young man was comforted with the idea that she would eventually 'yield to him' given time. She did not; see Atholl, *Chronicles, I*, p. 370.

⁸² Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 28-29.

⁸³ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 29.

the marriage went ahead as the young earl was prepared to embrace Presbyterianism. Whether his motives can be judged as purely romantic or driven in part by Duchess Anne's status and her considerable estates is difficult to judge. What is worth noting is that while Duchess Anne expected a level of obedience from her children over marriage she herself had acted in direct conflict with her father's wishes. As a convert to Presbyterianism her husband did meet her father's conditions but the whole issue was, legally, circumvented.

Rash or youthful behaviour in pursuing love was often the reason for not making an advantageous match, or at least making one which parents had not personally negotiated. The Marquis of Atholl wrote to his good friend Colonel Werden, Controller of the Duke of York's household in 1682 regarding his son, Lord Charles Murray (1661-1710). The young lord had engaged himself to be married to Werden's granddaughter, Catherine Watts (d. 1711). The Marquis insisted he had no doubts about the girl's 'modestie and wertiu' nor the 'wertiu and worthe' of her mother but his son's rash behaviour did cause some unease.⁸⁴ The Marquis and his wife had not been informed of Lord Charles' intentions and, although they did not oppose the marriage, the lack of respect their son showed in acting independently irked them. The Marquis excused this behaviour as being due to Lord Charles' inexperience and youth, 'reather than want of dieuty to us'.⁸⁵ Lord Charles was not so rash as to have told his parents at a point when proceedings could have been halted, so the marriage went ahead.

Lord George Hamilton, later earl of Orkney, (1663-1737), caused similar consternation in the Hamilton family by engaging himself to be married and, like Lord Charles, he did so while living away from Scotland. As a serving military officer Lord George moved in court circles and reports reached the family that he had married 'Mrs

⁸⁴ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, pp. 181-182.

⁸⁵ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, pp. 181-182

Betty Villiers' without asking the permission of his mother, Duchess Anne. Lady Dundonald informed Lady Katherine about their brother's actions commenting that the family had tried to stop him but that his bride would hold him to his proposal.⁸⁶ Family letters discussed Lady Elizabeth's dubious past and reputation as a former mistress of King William, and this had to be carefully weighed up and compared with her, alleged, financial worth. Lady Dundonald commented that their brother George considered himself happy but she was forced to admit a painful truth saying, 'we were all to [too] proud for we thought no family was like us for I have spok so much against marrying meanly and now I must hold my peace'.⁸⁷ Lord George appealed to Lord Murray at this time, asking him to remain friendly towards him and appease his mother, the Duchess, if possible. Lord George admitted his bride, 'has a blot but she has merite capable to wash that away', and romantically declared that, 'in this I was not my own master but tis love has absolutely determined me'.⁸⁸ The ever sensible counsel of another brother, Lord Basil, smoothed things over. He made tactful references to the lady's circumstances but also noted that her, 'caracter [is] of a very wise discreet woman and the world thinks she will prove a virtuous wife'.⁸⁹ However his most important argument regarding the bride was that she was, 'rumoured to be worth £8000 to £10000 per annum'.⁹⁰ This alone may have swayed those in the family who were unconvinced but of more interest was what influence, if any, she had with the king. While Lord George's personal considerations may have been based on love Lady Elizabeth Villiers' wealth, status at court and the Irish estates which had been granted to her by King William would all have countered the blemish on her character. In fact attempts by the family to have her use her

⁸⁶ Blair MS 29.I.(7).177 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Lady Katherine Murray, [Edinburgh] 27 November 1695.

⁸⁷ Blair MS 29.I.(7).177 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Lady Katherine Murray, [London] 27 November 1695.

⁸⁸ Blair MS 29.I.(7).178 Lord George Hamilton, to Lord Murray [London] 30 November 1695.

⁸⁹ Blair MS 29.I.(7).179 Lord Basil Hamilton, to Lord Murray [Holyroodhouse] 5 December 1695.

⁹⁰ Blair MS 29.I.(7).179 Lord Basil Hamilton, to Lord Murray [Holyroodhouse] 5 December 1695.

connections to speak personally with Lord Albemarle, advisor to the king, in 1698 about a matter which concerned Tullibardine were successful although Lord George pointed out that, ‘she bids you not depend upon it’.⁹¹ The income of the Irish estates was lost on the accession of Queen Anne but it does not seem that Orkney repented of his marriage. Lady Orkney’s correspondence with other women in the family shows her interest in the wider family, domestic concerns, the dissemination of political news and intrigues and also contains her valuable reports on military matters in which her husband was involved.⁹² Lord George may have ‘maryed meanly’ but his wife proved herself to have the qualities any Scottish noble could wish for in a wife.

Lord George Hamilton and Lord Charles Murray were, however, younger sons and as such could afford to conduct their own marriage negotiations and get away with the consequences. Others were not so fortunate. James Erskine, later Lord Grange (d. 1754), the younger brother of John Erskine, the sixth earl of Mar (1675-1732), married Rachel Chiesly (d. 1749) the daughter of John Chiesly of Dalry. Chiesly had left his own wife and children near destitute, was taken to court by his wife in 1689 and when ordered to pay alimony he turned his rage on George Lockhart, the Lord President of the Court of Session, and murdered him in the street.⁹³ Grange himself admitted he was deeply in love with Rachel but knew that he was entering a marriage that disgraced himself and the family.⁹⁴ He employed various relatives to persuade his brother into accepting the

⁹¹ Blair MS 29.I.(10).165 George, Earl of Orkney, to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine [London] 16 June 1698.

⁹² Examples of their correspondence includes discussions on family news and purchases but also on European or political news, see Blair MS 29.I.(10). 208 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Elizabeth, Countess of Orkney [Edinburgh] 13 September 1698; Blair MS 45.(1).167 Elizabeth, Countess of Orkney, to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Twicknam Park] 19 October 1700; Blair MS 45.(1).187 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Elizabeth, Countess of Orkney [Holyroodhouse] 26 February 1701, see also Atholl, *Chronicles, I*, pp. 475 and 479.

⁹³ Macaulay, *Prisoner of St Kilda*.

⁹⁴ Harry Maule informed Mar that, ‘yesterday your poor unfortunate brother Grange cam to me and told me he hade ruined himself by his marriage with one Chisly’. Maule also suggested that Grange would, ‘live abroad in disgrace with some mean employment’, see NAS GD124/15/300/1 Harry Maule, to Earl of Mar [Leith] 31 January 1706.

marriage. His aunt, Lady Napier, very eloquently pleaded his case and Mar accepted the marriage.⁹⁵ An issue with making a poor match was the impact this had on near relatives and on career prospects. Mar was a man with great plans for his future and, in the course of his career, his brother Grange rose to an important position in law.⁹⁶ Grange and his wife enjoyed some happy years together and had several children but Lady Grange had a difficult temper, a volatile nature and ultimately proved to be incompatible with Grange's career prospects.⁹⁷ Far from relying on his wife as a helpmeet and treating her as an advisor or confidant Grange had various mistresses and eventually removed estate and family management from his wife's control. The unhappiness and excessive drinking of Lady Grange became a liability to both Grange and Mar. Her inside knowledge of the family and some remarks about the alleged Jacobitism of both men led to her outrageous kidnapping and removal to the Hebrides.⁹⁸

Lady Grange's astounding story and the truth behind her marriage, health and mental state are difficult to assess but she provides an extreme example of what could happen within, what became, an unhappy marriage. Her experience also highlights the tenuous position of noblewomen as her life shows a remarkable rise from being the daughter of a convicted murderer to being the wife of a law lord. The impact of the Granges' deteriorating relationship was much worse for her as she was forced into social exile, separated from her children and eventually imprisoned while her husband remained at liberty to enjoy his life and career.

⁹⁵ NAS GD124/15/300 Harry Maule, to Earl of Mar [Leith] January-February 1706; NAS GD124/15/300/1 Harry Maule, to Earl of Mar [Leith] 31 January 1706; NAS GD124/15/300/2 Harry Maule, to Earl of Mar [Leith] 8 February 1706; NAS GD124/15/308 Earl of Panmure, to Earl of Mar [Breachin Castle] 6 February 1706; NAS GD124/15/318 Lady Napier, to Earl of Mar, [?] 20 February 1706;

⁹⁶ Macaulay, *Prisoner of St Kilda*, pp. 45-48.

⁹⁷ Grange's religious memoirs, written in 1717, outline this period of his life in some detail, describing his wife, their marriage and his behaviour, see NAS GD124/15/1179 Spiritual Diary of Lord Grange, 13 October-5 November 1717.

⁹⁸ Macaulay, *Prisoner of St Kilda*, pp. 45-87.

While this may be an indication of the oppression noblewomen could suffer it is important to remember that Lady Grange also made difficult choices. Understanding what the acceptable social parameters were and remaining within them allowed noblewomen to wield significant power within their marriages. Making the wrong decision, however provoking the circumstances, needed careful consideration. It would be unfair to suggest that Lady Grange could have prevented the failure of her marriage but exercising more control may have prevented her abduction. Far from suggesting the subordination of women Lady Grange's story is one of personal strength as she fought her fate and attempted to expose her husband's treachery. The equality couples could share in some instances was clearly something that was hard won but easily compromised or lost. The power in these situations lay with men as the legal position of women could outweigh their emotional strength. It is difficult to imagine higher status noblewomen suffering the way Lady Grange did but this illustrates her husband's ability to exploit her lower status when once he had risked his own to marry her. In essence what he gave, that is, love, respectability and status, he took away. Knowing that this parity could be removed did not prevent women from pursuing it although truly noble women had a sense of their own status as the daughter of nobility before becoming a wife. These women seem to have enjoyed a more secure position and greater parity overall.

Partnerships

The marriage of Lady Katherine Hamilton and John, Lord Murray, later Duke and Duchess of Atholl, demonstrates a marriage based on trust, love and unfailing support. Built on such strong foundations, with a shared sense of religiosity, they provide a stark

contrast to Lord and Lady Grange. Lady Katherine was a highly politicised noblewomen and her support of her husband in relation to his political career will be explored in subsequent chapters.⁹⁹ Their domestic life relied on her ability to manage the household and family concerns which allowed him the freedom to maintain a presence in Edinburgh and at Court in London. Their correspondence provides evidence of what they shared in terms of news concerning legal, political and religious affairs which were either personal or impacted on the wider family.¹⁰⁰ A family issue in 1699 caused a near feud between Atholl, then earl of Tullibardine, and his father, the Marquis of Atholl, and is a good example of Lady Katherine's role as advisor and mediator.

Nobles who held heritable jurisdictions were required by law to 'qualify themselves', usually by taking an oath to the monarch, or risk losing their office.¹⁰¹ The Marquis held the office of Bailie of Regality of Atholl but ignored the king's request to qualify himself and so lost the post. It was proposed to appoint Tullibardine in his father's stead which the Marquis took 'very much amiss'.¹⁰² Lady Katherine wrote to her husband on this problem because she was at Huntingtower while he was in Edinburgh and so she dealt first hand with the Marquis' angry response. She wrote in June that, 'there is nothing done since the revolution will vex your father so as this', and that her father-in-law was 'breaking his brain' to find out who had proposed Tullibardine as he, 'will think it don designedly against him'.¹⁰³ She gave her opinion that the council was right to want Tullibardine to take the post and that others thought so

⁹⁹ von den Steinen, 'Women's Political Activism', pp.112-122; Carr, 'National Identity and Political Agency'.

¹⁰⁰ Blair MS Boxes 44 and 45 Correspondence of the Duke and Duchess of Atholl between 1684 and 1707; Atholl, *Chronicles, I and II*.

¹⁰¹ Records of the Parliaments of Scotland [RPS] 1695/5/203. K.M. Brown et al (eds), *The Records of the Parliaments of Scotland to 1707* (St Andrews, 2007-2012), date accessed: May 2012.

¹⁰² Blair MS 45.(1).16 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine [Huntingtower] 17 June 1699 and also Atholl, *Chronicles I*, p. 461.

¹⁰³ Blair MS 45.(1).16 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine [Huntingtower] 17 June 1699.

too. She emphasised how it suggested division in the family for a father to be seen preventing his own son to hold the position. Two days later Lady Katherine reported in detail what was happening and the Marquis' reaction. She began by saying ominously, 'it's hard for me to tell you all, & yett its fitt you should know it', before stating that the Marquis would not be persuaded to resign the honour in Tullibardine's favour.¹⁰⁴ At this point various members of the family were attempting to dissuade the Marquis from going to Edinburgh to confront Tullibardine. Open division between father and son had to be avoided. Her advice then became more dramatic as Lady Katherine instructed Tullibardine to feign surprise should his father arrive in Edinburgh. She reminded him that she had also changed the date on a letter of explanation to the Marquis and to, 'owne it of the [new] deat [date] if it be spoake of', and to tell his secretary to do the same.¹⁰⁵ She was brutally honest with Tullibardine over what had transpired and did not spare him details on his father's outrage informing him, 'you are intyerly blamed for this and it looks very ill in a son to deal so with a father'. She continued to try to calm her husband counselling, 'take my advice [to] desier it no more of him', and to let his father, 'doe in it as he pleases'.¹⁰⁶

The correspondence points to the conclusion that Tullibardine most likely had been involved in attempting to secure the office for himself, knowing that his father would not renew this heritable claim as requested.¹⁰⁷ Whether Lady Katherine had been

¹⁰⁴ Blair MS 45.(1).16 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine [Huntingtower] 17 June 1699.

¹⁰⁵ Blair MS 45.(1).17 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine [Huntingtower] 19 June 1699.

¹⁰⁶ Blair MS 45.(1).17 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine [Huntingtower] 19 June 1699.

¹⁰⁷ Blair MS 45.(1).18 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine [Huntingtower] 20 June 1699; Blair MS 45.(1).19 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine [Huntingtower] 21 June 1699; Blair MS 45.(1).20 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine [Huntingtower] 22 June 1699; Blair MS 45.(1).21 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine [Huntingtower] 23 June 1699. Lady Nairne wrote, 'wishing the quarrel was over', Blair MS 45.(1).23 Margaret, Lady Nairne, to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine [Nairne] 1 July, 1699

involved in formulating this plan is not clear but it is obvious she dealt with the ensuing crisis. Her letters were detailed and repetitive and she consistently urged him to keep his temper and react reasonably. The threat that someone other than Tullibardine would replace his father would cause most embarrassment but the Marquis was stubborn. Lady Katherine urged her husband to have patience but it was not long until she lost her own. The Marquis travelled to Perth and failed to call on his daughter-in-law at Huntingtower in passing. Her response to this fully illustrates the division in the family and the tension of such situations. She wrote to Tullibardine,

I cannot hold from telling you I take very ill your fathers going by within half a mile of my nose, & not coming in here, nor so much as sending; if you had married of the dunghill he could have used me no worse...I am not sencible I have don anything to deserve such a publick slight...¹⁰⁸

Her attitude, language and tone illustrate Lady Katherine's understanding of family interest. Her reaction suggests that it was not just securing this office, or any similar positions which were necessary for family advancement, but also the protection of the 'publick' perception of the family. Her main concern was keeping her husband from allowing his temper to get the better of him because open hostility was counterproductive for the family.¹⁰⁹ Her letters advised him on the best course of action and constantly repeated her wish that he should not do anything rash. Resolving the matter was not easy given the geographical distance and limitations of communications and in some instances her anger must surely have fed her husband's notorious temper.

and the Marchioness of Atholl wrote to her son on the whole issue, Blair MS 45.(1).32 Amelia, Marchioness of Atholl, to Earl of Tullibardine [Dunkeld] 7 August 1699.

¹⁰⁸ Blair MS 45.(1).19 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine [Huntingtower] 21 June 1699; Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 466.

¹⁰⁹ Lady Katherine involved her brother Lord Basil and, eventually, even the Duchess of Hamilton wrote to the Marchioness in a bid to bring the situation under control as the unity of the Hamilton and Atholl families was at stake, see Blair MS 45.(1).35 Lord Basil Hamilton, to Earl of Tullibardine [Hamilton] 22 August 1699 and Blair MS 45.(1).36 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, to Marchioness of Atholl [Hamilton] 22 August 1699.

The letters demonstrate the necessary qualities required of the wife of a prominent noble. Although obedient she was as clear in her expressions of anger or frustration as she was in expressing her tenderness and devotion. She acknowledged her husband's feelings and difficult position but this did not prevent her from attempting to control his response and influence his behaviour. She knew his reactions and the kind of language and accusation that would infuriate him most and yet she 'told him all'. Her honesty was vital because Tullibardine could only act appropriately if he had the details from someone he trusted. Tullibardine's acceptance of his wife's opinions and advice as well as his unspoken acceptance of her forthright manner of expression suggests that her behaviour was acceptable to him. He did not limit or stifle her responses and in doing so he gained a valuable, well informed ally in his wife.

Other marriages were similarly open, honest and affectionate. Patrick Hume, first earl of Marchmont (1641-1724) made a happy and productive marriage with his wife Grizel Ker (d. 1703).¹¹⁰ Their daughter, also Grisell (1665-1746), became a heroine within the family but was also a beloved wife and mother. Marchmont was forced into hiding and then exile after the execution of his close friend Robert Baillie in 1684.¹¹¹ Baillie's son, George Baillie of Jerviswood (1664-1748), lived in exile with the family but formed an attachment to Grisell that had to be concealed due to his reduced circumstances which prevented them from marrying at that time. Grisell refused suitors her parents introduced and also denied herself a place at court in preferring to wait for Baillie's fortunes to change and allow them to marry.¹¹² The support Marchmont and Baillie gave William of Orange in 1688 facilitated a change in fortune for both families. Lady Grisell proved herself to be a devoted wife, able manager and trusted confidant to

¹¹⁰ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, pp. 8-15.

¹¹¹ J. R. Young, 'Hume, Patrick, first earl of Marchmont (1641-1724)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004); online edn, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14150>, accessed 5 Oct 2010].

¹¹² Stanhope, *Memoirs*; Scott-Moncrieffe, *Book of Lady Griselle Baillie*.

her husband. The help and assistance she gave Jerviswood in managing ‘family business’ was invaluable and he never asked her questions about, ‘the whole management of his private affairs’, only asking, ‘if his debt was paid’.¹¹³

Lady Grisell also corresponded with and managed the financial affairs of her brother, Patrick, Lord Polwarth, when he was abroad in 1716.¹¹⁴ Likewise in 1710 she wrote with remarkable candour to her father regarding his finances and the sale of land, as a rumour about his circumstances had been brought to her attention by someone she declared had good intentions, ‘els she would not be so free’, in recounting the gossip. She continued to relate to him the details of the issue and her reaction to it but reassured him of her objectives, hoping he did not mind her honesty and ability to, ‘tell her mind so freely [as] I alwies do’.¹¹⁵ The ability to freely express her opinions to both her father and her husband has to be considered in relation to the wider implications of the family’s politics and interests. The marriage between Lady Grisell and Baillie of Jerviswood united two important political families and Grisell was as involved in Jerviswood’s political career as she was in his household and business.

Widows.

The premature death of a spouse was common and in, ‘practical terms was the equivalent of divorce in the modern period’.¹¹⁶ Making one good match could be difficult to achieve but making another thereafter presented further issues which noblewomen had to navigate. Susan, Countess of Dundonald and daughter of Duchess Anne, was widowed in 1690 and relied on her family for advice and support especially

¹¹³ Stanhope, *Memoirs*, p. 73

¹¹⁴ Stanhope, *Memoirs*, p. 73.

¹¹⁵ NAS GD158/1098 Copies of letters between Lady Grisell Baillie and Earl of Marchmont, 1694-1711.

¹¹⁶ Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English*, pp. 354-355; Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power*, pp. 45-48; Lanza, *Wives to Widows*, pp. 2-4; Brown, *Noble Society*, p. 138-144.

in matters concerning the education and health of her three children.¹¹⁷ By 1697 she was considering re-marrying and her own management of the negotiations prompted her mother to defend her actions to her brother, then Earl of Arran. Duchess Anne wrote to him in July of 1697 confirming that Lady Dundonald would choose her own husband and that she did not expect her son to criticise his sister for any delay, ‘since [this] was his own practise.’¹¹⁸ Arran had been in no rush to make a second marriage although the entire family urged him to do so. Lady Dundonald was close to her brother and freely commented on his marital state and the rumours of his affairs. She noted in 1695 that he was, ‘so much taken up with a dutchesse that you can’t have time to seek a wife’.¹¹⁹ She acknowledged in another letter that she believed it was, ‘much harder to mary a second time than the first so the resolution must be we will do itt and the sooner the better’.¹²⁰ Drawing comparisons between their respective marital issues created a feeling of sibling solidarity and Lady Dundonald commented on his affairs and also his financial problems without causing difficulty between them. Arran relied on his sisters to smooth matters with his mother and also to act as mediators between the Hamilton family and the families they married into. Lady Katherine was an important point of mediation between the Murray of Atholl family and her own. Letters between her mother and siblings provide firm evidence that she worked hard at maintaining good family relations between her own proud husband and her impetuous brother.¹²¹ She may not always have

¹¹⁷ NAS GD406/1/9099 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran [?] 3 June 1694; NAS GD406/1/7364, Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran [Edinburgh] 27 October 1694; NAS GD406/1/7365, Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran [Edinburgh] 8 November 1694; NAS GD406/1/7367, Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran [Edinburgh] 27 November 1694; NAS GD406/1/7368, Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran [Edinburgh] 20 December 1694.

¹¹⁸ NAS GD406/1/6773 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, to Earl of Arran [Hamilton] 8 July 1697.

¹¹⁹ NAS GD406/1/9092 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran [Edinburgh] 3 January 1695.

¹²⁰ NAS GD406/1/6420 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran [Holyroodhouse] 28 February 1697.

¹²¹ Letters show Lady Katherine corresponding with various family members. Subsequent chapters will highlight her correspondence on a variety of matters, not least keeping good relations within the wider family. She even corresponded with women at court such as Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, see Blair MS 45.(2).155 Duke of Hamilton to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine [Kinneil] 2 August 1702; Blair

been successful but this role was hers from the moment she married into another significant Scottish noble family.

As a widow Lady Dundonald's second marriage was as important to the wider family as it was to her own future and the future of her children. She had two sons from her first marriage and the difficulties she faced in managing their education and inheritance can be discerned from the many letters she sent to her brother Arran.¹²² He and relatives from her husband's family were tutors to the boys, with her brother-in-law, William Cochrane of Kilmarnock, a particular thorn in her side. Many issues concerning the health of the boys, where they should live, as well as legal matters and estate problems were brought to her brother's attention. Lady Dundonald understood that the status of her brother added power to her own authority and she fully exploited this connection to ensure her children's affairs were managed to her satisfaction. This was her personal reason for wishing Arran would marry and settle in Scotland because he would be nearer to her and therefore of greater influence in her affairs. She admitted that he filled the role of father for her after the third duke's death in 1694 and her letters were full of her concern for his interest suffering, 'by your living out of this country'. Although she apologised for, 'wearying him out of your life with this subject', it did not prevent her from mentioning it.¹²³

Marrying a second time meant considering the broader issues of whether a second husband would support the interests of her children and whether his personal interests were compatible with the family. As ever the matter of finances was paramount. Lady

MS 45.(2).130 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton to Katherine Countess of Tullibardine [Hamilton] 11 May 1702; Blair MS 45.(2).246 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton to Katherine Countess of Tullibardine [Hamilton] 26 October 1702; Blair MS 45.(3).29 Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine [St James] 17 March 1703.

¹²² NAS GD406/1/6818 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran [Edinburgh] 16 June 1695; NAS GD406/1/6420 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran [Holyroodhouse] 28 February 1697.

¹²³ NAS GD406/1/7368 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran [Edinburgh] 20 December 1694; NAS GD406/1/7470 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran [Edinburgh] 22 February 1695; NAS GD406/1/7444 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran [Edinburgh] 18 April 1695.

Dundonald married Charles Hay, Lord Yester (1667-1715) in December of 1697 after seven years of widowhood. Marrying imprudently could be seriously detrimental to a son and heir and it was practical for a widow to be mindful of family obligations and interest. Lady Dundonald successfully negotiated the terms very carefully and also kept her family guessing as to her decision. A proposal from one potential suitor was viewed as superior to that made by Lord Yester. Lady Dundonald commented to her family that the terms of the marriage settlement which Tweeddale, Yester's father, would give were, 'so very meen that I believe there will be little more of that affair'.¹²⁴ Giving out this knowledge was designed to urge Yester to press for better terms from his family, just as Arran had done with Duchess Anne. Lord Basil wrote to Arran telling him the Master of Yester 'lays close siege' to their sister,¹²⁵ and although Lady Dundonald understood her worth and the value of a good financial settlement it appears Yester had won her affection. Lord Basil wrote about this to his brother stating that, 'none here doth approve of it, but you knou, she will take her oun mind', for, 'she is her oun mistress, & thers nothing to be said against the young man.'¹²⁶ Lady Dundonald married Yester in 1697 and despite the earlier difficulties it appeared the match was suitable as Hamilton wrote to Tweeddale's father expressing the satisfaction he felt that both families, '[were] soe nearly tied to one another', and asserted, 'we are united by the interest of our Families'.¹²⁷

The marriage was deemed a success although there was some consternation that Lady Dundonald would have to relinquish her precedence as a countess by taking the

¹²⁴ NAS GD406/1/6422 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran [Holyroodhouse] 18 March, 1697. She further dismissed the advances of Lord Drummond believing his family had been keen on the match rather than himself, commenting that he, 'managed his politicks and his love affairs badly'; Blair MS 29.I.(9).138 Susan, Countess of Dundonald to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine [Holyroodhouse] 17 March 1697.

¹²⁵ NAS GD406/1/7567 Lord Basil Hamilton, to Earl of Arran [Holyroodhouse] 27 March 1697.

¹²⁶ NAS GD406/1/7568 Lord Basil Hamilton, to Earl of Arran [Holyroodhouse] 30 March 1697.

¹²⁷ NAS GD406/1/9069 Earl of Arran, to Marquis of Tweeddale [London] 14 January 1698.

title of Lady Yester after her marriage. The family did not want to see, ‘all the Countesses goe before her’, and only a warrant from the king would allow her to, ‘take [her] place as a dukes daughter’, but it seems the couple had no desire for this and she was determined to be Lady Yester. Preserving the precedence of title and rank was another issue for widows and although Lady Dundonald was content to relinquish hers this was probably unwise as in the event of Yester’s death her status would have been unequal to that which she had by birthright. In contrast Lady Katherine negotiated with Atholl to ensure he obtained the King’s warrant protecting her status as a duke’s daughter.¹²⁸ Just as her love for Yester made Lady Dundonald give up her titles, respect and affection for his wife made Atholl pursue his wife’s request to protect her status. The mercenary part of marriage can be discerned in the financial negotiations and hard bargaining, the protection of children and heirs and the securing of status. That noblewomen undertook such negotiations almost independently and were recognised as having their own minds shows that arranging marriages was an area where they could exercise a level of autonomy.

Some noblewomen, however, were more excluded from marital arrangements. Anne, Countess of Seafield (d. 1708) wrote to her son, Lord Deskford in 1707 with advice on his marriage. Although she claimed she was ‘litell capabell’ to give it she still wrote fully on finding a person from a good family, ‘sober senesabell pipell’ and she could not deny that a ‘family of quality’ was what she wished most and by that she did, ‘not min by quality only the nobility’, although she did not elaborate on this.¹²⁹ The Countess continued that she, ‘wold not have hir much above your oun eag, bot above all soberly

¹²⁸ In January of 1697 Lady Katherine wrote to her husband in London saying that she would ‘say nothing more’ on the matter of, ‘obtaining a patent to give her precedence’, but she added that, ‘her mother and relations’, believed she should have it, see Blair MS 29.I.(9).4 Katherine Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Holyroodhouse] 6 January 1697. Tullibardine responded later that month confirming he had indeed secured the patent as she requested, see Blair MS 29.I.(9).23 Earl of Tullibardine to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine [London] 23 January 1697.

¹²⁹ NAS GD248/560/40/41 Anne, Countess of Seafield, to Lord Deskford [Cullen] 5 December 1707.

and religuisly edecat, and I wold have you inforem your seleff of hir parsonall qualatiys both as to wit and inclination'.¹³⁰ The Countess was not terribly optimistic and urged her son to pray for 'god's direction' in the matter and wanted to know from him who his father suggested. Above all she urged caution and for both men not to, 'engage rashly in anything'.¹³¹ Although her language would appear to suggest calm compliance and a desire to leave this matter to the men her lengthy instructions and request for news betrays her frustration at being excluded. She did not live to see her son married. Lord Deskford married twice, in both instances to Scots noblewomen, just as his father and his grandfather had done.¹³² Although his father, the first earl of Seafield, has been recognised as one of the key Scotsmen who supported and secured the Union of 1707 the family did not pursue marital alliances outside of Scotland.

Ties of Kin: the Origins of the *Squadron Volante*.

The idea that the changes initiated by Union would induce Scots noble families to consider English alliances has been a factor in stimulating this research.¹³³ The figures on marriages, outlined above, do not support the idea that Scots had a clear intention towards assimilation after the Revolution or prior to Union. What the examples outlined above do indicate clearly is that noblewomen could have an active and important role in arranging marriages and preserving the family line and interest. Exploring in more detail

¹³⁰ NAS GD248/560/40/41 Anne, Countess of Seafield, to Lord Deskford [Cullen] 5 December 1707.

¹³¹ NAS GD248/560/40/41 Anne, Countess of Seafield, to Lord Deskford [Cullen] 5 December 1707.

¹³² Deskford's father, the fourth earl of Findlater, later earl of Seafield, married Anne Dunbar in 1687 and his grandfather, the third earl of Findlater married firstly Anne Montgomery in 1658 and secondly Lady Mary Hamilton in 1701, so all three generations made Scottish matches, see Paul, *Scots Peerage, IV*, pp. 35-38.

¹³³ Keith Brown has carried out similar studies on the period of the Union and the Union of the Crowns, see K. M. Brown, 'The Origins of a British Aristocracy', pp. 222-249; Brown, 'The Scottish Aristocracy', pp. 543-576. Similarly Jane Ohlmeyer's recent research on Irish marriage stems from ideas about Irish assimilation with the English, see, Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English*, pp. 337-408.

how the Scottish networks and family alliances were created and maintained, as these were the basis for political power, further illuminates a vital female role.

It is impossible to search one Scottish noble family line without making deviations into various others.¹³⁴ The complex task of unravelling family connections and ties is challenging and tends to lead to more associations becoming apparent. An important political grouping which broke away from within the Country party after 1702 was the ‘new party’ or the *squadron volante*.¹³⁵ This group held significant voting power and influence in union debates and although keen to secure a, ‘fair bargain with England’, their political ideology stemmed from old experiences and their, ‘fear of something beyond party, namely the nemesis of their old enemies the Stuarts and the “unnatural” religion they adhered to’.¹³⁶ The members of the *squadron volante* have been referred to as a ‘close knit group’ with numerous family connections and various ties of kin evident in their relationships.¹³⁷ This party represents a clearly defined political group which emerged within the period 1688-1707 and so presents a good case study for analysis. The sample of noblewomen used in this thesis presents complications as some *squadron* members are not strictly within the category of nobility outlined previously. For the purposes of exploring this group’s connections all related women have been counted and noted, bearing in mind the distinctions in status if necessary.¹³⁸

One attempt to acknowledge and convey the family connections of the *squadron* within union historiography has concluded that ‘at least nine’ members were related.¹³⁹ This is certainly true but more detailed examination highlights the interconnectedness of

¹³⁴ Marshall notes the small Scottish nobility meant limited numbers for marrying, see Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, pp. 66-67.

¹³⁵ Riley, *Union*, pp. 76-97; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 35.

¹³⁶ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 248-249.

¹³⁷ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 248.

¹³⁸ Only seven members of the *squadron volante* are titled nobility but the family connections extend into other branches of the family outwith this status. See list of *squadron* members, appendix three.

¹³⁹ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 249.

this group and so also illuminates the role of women. Thorough analysis extends the search through family ancestry well before 1688 but this is necessary to establish the initial connections and demonstrates that the ties of kin apparent in the pre union parliament were the result of relationships forged over many years. (see map charting *squadron* marriages and connections, table 1.3)

In the year 1648 John Lindsay, the seventeenth earl of Crawford (d. 1678), married off three daughters. These were Anne (d. 1689), Christian (d. 1704), and Elizabeth (d. 1688). Anne married John Leslie, seventh earl of Rothes (1630-1681), Christian married John, the fourth earl of Haddington (1662-1669) and in 1669 Elizabeth married David Carnegie, third earl of Northesk (1643-1688).¹⁴⁰ As there would always have been more daughters of peers than heirs seeking marriages Crawford would have been considered fortunate to make such good matches for his daughters.¹⁴¹ These families were connected by marriage from this time but it is quite likely that still earlier marriages took place between the families as existing connections often prompted subsequent matches.¹⁴²

The Rothes marriage resulted in two daughters, Margaret (d. 1700) and Christian (1661-1710), but no sons so Margaret, the eldest, became Countess of Rothes in her own right in 1681 when her father died.¹⁴³ A match between her and her Haddington cousin Charles, fifth earl of Haddington (1650-1674), her aunt Christian's son, was deemed to

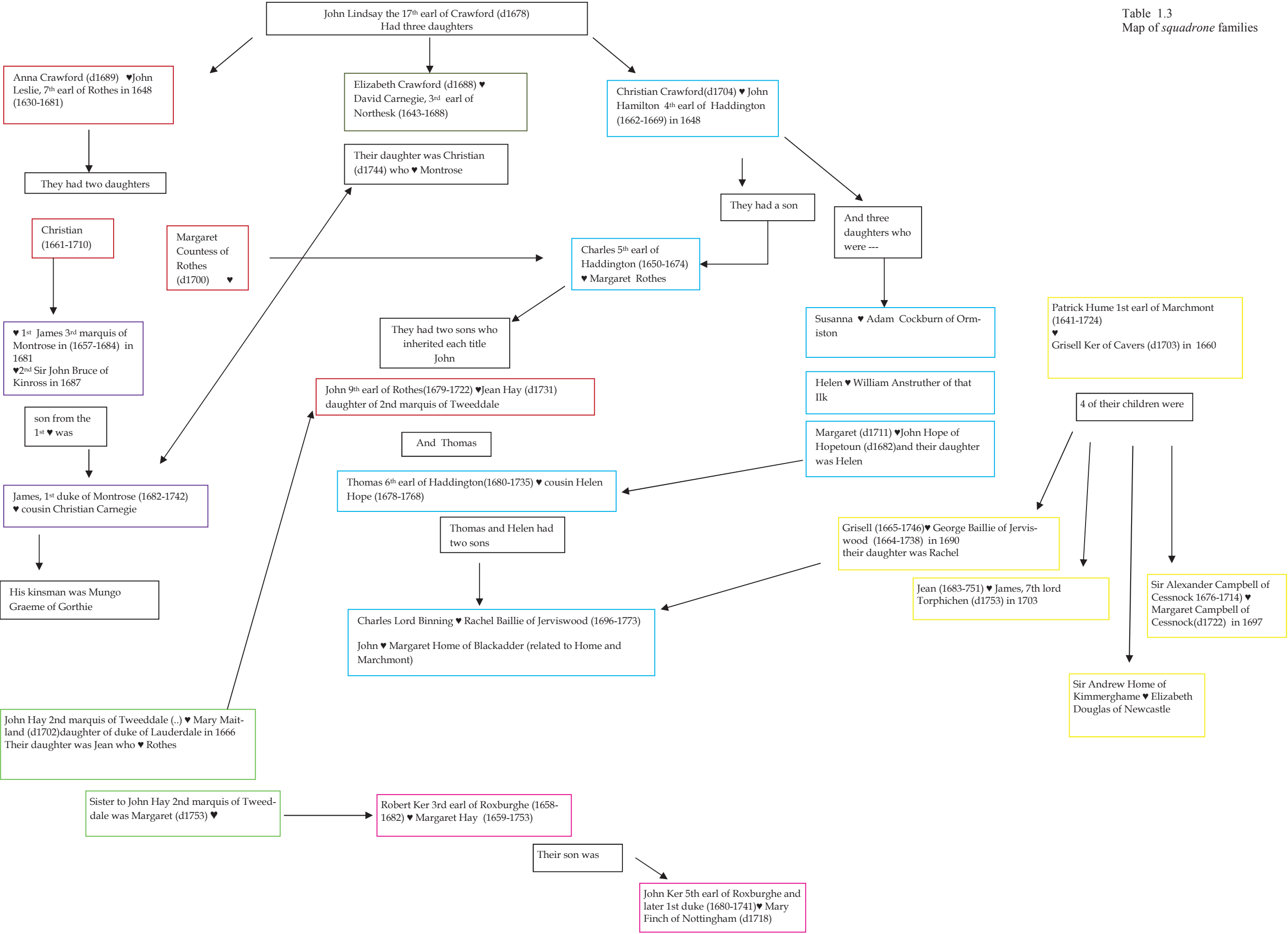
¹⁴⁰ The marriage took place with both parties, Rothes and Haddington, acting as witness to the others, see Paul, *Scots Peerage*, III, p. 37; Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VII, pp. 301-302; W. Fraser, *Memorials of the Earls of Haddington*, (2 vols, Edinburgh, 1889), I, pp. 211-219.

¹⁴¹ Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, p. 67.

¹⁴² John, seventeenth earl of Crawford was descended from the Lindsay family and his earlier predecessors made marriages into the Rothes family with James, seventh lord Lindsay, marrying Euphemia Leslie the daughter of the fifth earl of Rothes in 1573 and Margaret, sister of the seventh lord Lindsay, marrying James, Master of Rothes before 1600, see Paul, *Scots Peerage*, V, pp. 400-401 and Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VII, pp. 293-294. Euphemia Leslie's sister Margaret divorced her husband Archibald, eighth earl of Angus, in 1587 because she had, 'an intrigue with the Earl of Montrose', and while the *Scots Peerage* gives no further details the Montrose connection certainly endured, see Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VII, pp. 293-294.

¹⁴³ C. J. Leslie, *Historical Records of the Family of Leslie from 1067 to 1868-9* (2 vols, Edinburgh, 1869), II, pp. 113-122; Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VII, pp. 300-305.

Table 1.3
Map of *squadrone* families



be the best solution to protect the family lines. It was decided that the eldest son of this marriage would take the Rothes title and their next son would inherit the Haddington title thus preserving both family names.¹⁴⁴ Margaret and Charles had two sons, John and Thomas, and both sons did indeed inherit as intended. Charles died in 1685, leaving Margaret in charge of the estates until their sons came of age, so that John became the ninth earl of Rothes (1679-1722)¹⁴⁵ and his brother Thomas became the sixth earl of Haddington (1680-1735).

The young earls of Rothes and Haddington also had *squadron* relations through their aunts, the sisters of their father Charles and so these were also cousins of their mother Margaret. Charles had eight sisters and three made marriages of note. Margaret (d. 1711) married John Hope of Hopetoun in 1668 but he drowned in 1682 leaving his wife to take charge of their children and estates and her son became Charles, earl of Hopetoun (1681-1742).¹⁴⁶ Her daughter Helen (1678-1768) married her cousin Thomas, Margaret and Charles' second son, and so she became the Countess of Haddington.¹⁴⁷ Another aunt, also named Helen, married William Anstruther of that Ilk in 1677 and yet another, Susanna, married Adam Cockburn of Ormiston, later Lord Justice Clerk in 1679.¹⁴⁸ Both of these names feature on the list of *squadron* members prior to union. John Cockburn of Ormiston was the son of Susanna and Adam Ormiston and so was the nephew of Haddington and Rothes while William Anstruther was their uncle.

The other daughter from the initial Rothes marriage was Christian. She married James Graham, third marquis of Montrose (1657-1684) in 1681.¹⁴⁹ They had only one

¹⁴⁴ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, IV, p. 319.

¹⁴⁵ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, IV, p. 319. The *Scots Peerage* calls him the eighth earl as they do not recognise his mother as being the eighth title holder although the family history does, see Leslie, *Records of Leslie*, II, p. 115.

¹⁴⁶ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, IV, p. 493.

¹⁴⁷ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, IV, p. 319.

¹⁴⁸ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, IV, p. 318.

¹⁴⁹ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, p. 259.

son, also James Graham, later first duke of Montrose (1682-1742). His father died in 1684 aged only twenty six leaving the estates and responsibility for the future heir in his wife's hands. Their son also had several tutors with Haddington named among them and also one named John Bruce of Kinross. The widowed Christian went on to marry Bruce of Kinross in 1687 and his name features alongside her son in the list of *squadron* members.¹⁵⁰ A third man connected by ties of kin to the Montrose interest was Mungo Graeme of Gorthie, a kinsman of the duke and his trusted factor and friend. Although not related by marriage his adherence to the *squadron* could in part be attributed to loyalty to Montrose.

A further connection between Montrose and Haddington emerges when we find that the young Duke of Montrose married Christian Carnegie (d. 1744), daughter of David Carnegie the third earl of Northesk in 1702.¹⁵¹ This was the child of the third Crawford daughter mentioned earlier, Elizabeth, sister of Anna and Christian who had married into the Rothes and Haddington families respectively.¹⁵² Both David, third earl of Northesk, and his wife Elizabeth died in 1688 and the orphaned family they left behind was taken in by Elizabeth's sister, Christian, Countess of Haddington. The marriage therefore of Christian Carnegie to Montrose in 1702 further strengthened both the Northesk and Haddington family's ties with other *squadron* members.

Exploration into other *squadron* families further demonstrates marital connections. The Tweeddale and Roxburghe families were connected through marriage as Robert Ker, third earl of Roxburghe, had married Margaret Hay in 1675. He died in 1682 and she survived him, living for a further seventy-one years as she died in 1753. As the eldest daughter of John Hay, first marquis of Tweeddale, her brother, also John was the

¹⁵⁰ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, p. 259

¹⁵¹ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, p. 263.

¹⁵² Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, pp. 498-502.

second marquis and another prominent parliamentarian and *squadron* member.¹⁵³ He married Mary (1645-1702) daughter of John Maitland, first duke of Lauderdale (1616-1682) and their daughter Jean (d. 1731) further strengthened *squadron* links by marrying the ninth earl of Rothes in 1697.

These connections were begun as far back as 1648 with the marriages of the Crawford sisters uniting three family groups initially but looking forward from the union period we see that these family connections endured. Thomas, sixth earl of Haddington also had two sons, Charles, Lord Binning (1697-1732) and John (d. 1772). Both of these men went on to marry relatives of other *squadron* members. Lord Binning married Rachel Baillie (d. 1773) in 1720. She was the daughter of George Baillie of Jarviswood and Lady Grisell Hume who was the daughter of Patrick Hume, earl of Marchmont. John married Margaret, the daughter of Sir John Home of Blackadder in 1728.¹⁵⁴ The Humes or Homes were kin so exploring their marriages uncovers more connections. Lord Binning and Rachel Baillie had two sons, the eldest, Thomas, became the seventh earl of Haddington and the second, George, assumed the name Baillie of Jarviswood and inherited the Baillie estates from his aunt Grisell, Lady Murray of Stanhope, when she died.¹⁵⁵ Thus the initial connection between these families, Rothes and Haddington, with the Humes of Marchmont and the Baillies of Jarviswood, which was distinct in pre Union years, saw them completely merge after 1707.

Patrick Hume, earl of Marchmont, also had distinctive *squadron* connections. Although by the time of the formation of the *squadron* Marchmont was alluded to as an ageing politician he was, 'not quite a spent political force'.¹⁵⁶ Indeed he brought youth with him in the form of two sons and two sons-in-law to join the ranks of the *squadron*

¹⁵³ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VIII, pp. 458-462.

¹⁵⁴ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, pp. 12-17; Warrender, *Marchmont and Humes*.

¹⁵⁵ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, IV, pp. 322-324.

¹⁵⁶ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 249.

party. Sir Andrew Home of Kimmerghame and Sir Alexander Campbell of Cessnock were his sons while his two daughters, Grisell and Jean were married to George Baillie of Jerviswood and James Sandilands, seventh Lord Torphichen (d. 1753) respectively.¹⁵⁷ Patrick, Lord Polwarth, Marchmont's eldest son and heir died in 1709. He had married his cousin, Elizabeth Hume but her consumption appeared to infect him and after her death in 1701 he married again but died soon after. Alexander had not expected to inherit and had made his marriage to Margaret Campbell, daughter of Sir George Campbell of Cessnock, in 1697 although he undertook a career in politics thereafter.¹⁵⁸

Unravelling the family connections is a complex task but ultimately it is not just the intricacies of these links that are revealed or the protracted nature of these relationships and alliances. Many noble families demonstrate significant ties and overlaps but they did not all remain as closely connected as this group did. The Haddington family was connected to the Humes of Polwarth as far back as 1613, which might have impacted upon later marriages, but then again William Johnstone, second earl of Annandale, was brother-in-law to the three Crawford sisters and their brother, the eighteenth earl. This connection could explain the later marriage of the earl of Annandale's daughter Henrietta to Charles Hope of Hopetoun in 1699 but it does not appear to have resulted in *squadron* associations before union.¹⁵⁹

Despite the links and connections outlined here it is almost impossible to ascertain why these families became politically enmeshed after 1702 but it highlights a key question related to the role of women: was it family interest and the survival of a noble

¹⁵⁷ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VIII, pp. 394-395.

¹⁵⁸ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, pp.12-19.

¹⁵⁹ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, III, p. 37; Similarly the Earl of Mar chose an alliance with his wife's friends the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry rather than her relatives Hay and Tweeddale, see, Paul, *Scots Peerage*, V, pp. 626-632. Likewise the Murray of Atholl family encompassed families with strong Jacobite connections including Nairne which meant although allied through marriage political support was not always forthcoming, see, Graham, 'Nairn'. These differences did not prevent women from maintaining important networks within the family.

line which motivated them? Or their shared religious beliefs and experiences as well as an emerging political ideology which united family groups? There are many factors to consider when establishing why some families stayed closer than others. In the case of the three Crawford marriages, which could be said to be at the heart of the *squadron* grouping, it is the death of the menfolk, leaving the women in control, which had an important impact. Widows acting independently had a good deal of authority and their choices clearly impacted on later family connections. Christian Crawford married the fourth earl of Haddington in the same year as her sister Anna married Rothes, 1648. The death of Haddington in 1669 left Christian in control of their son's future. Anna's marriage to Rothes had the problem of no son and heir, only two daughters, so a plan to marry the children of these matches was the best way to secure both lines. Rothes may have had a hand in these arrangements but there is such a close family link it is arguable that the sisters were central to planning for the future and were making matches accordingly. Rothes made legal provision for his daughters to inherit before his death and Margaret did inherit when he died in 1681. With her husband Charles, the fifth earl of Haddington, they successfully defended their claim to the Rothes title and earldom, secured the Rothes and Haddington lines and made further familial connections.

Charles Hamilton, however, also died relatively young and left his wife Margaret to continue to preserve the family connections on her own. As he died in 1685 their sons John, born in 1679, and Thomas, born in 1680, were left under female parental control.¹⁶⁰ Thomas, as sixth earl of Haddington, went on to marry his cousin Helen Hope. Her father, Sir John Hope of Hopetoun, had died in 1682 so we find yet another of these related families bereft of a father and managed by a widow. Noblewomen's

¹⁶⁰ Margaret, Countess of Rothes, is credited in both the history of the Haddington family and the historical records of the Leslie family as having defended her right to the title and secured the rights to both the Rothes and Haddington titles for her sons. Both histories also suggests that she was instrumental in suggesting the financial solution which prevented Haddington losing his estate completely, see Leslie, *Leslie, II*, p. 122 and Fraser, *Haddington, I*, p. 235.

actions here might best be described as crucial to family survival but, viewed in isolation, they do not explain the later political grouping which materialized.

The Haddington family history stresses the deep financial difficulties the young earl of Haddington faced and noted that his mother, the Countess of Rothes, and his aunt, the Dowager Countess of Haddington, gave up their annuities to relieve the financial burden on the family. Haddington's mother also proposed solutions to managing debt by suggesting leasing property to ease the financial situation.¹⁶¹ The Hopetoun family agreed to lease part of the estate in 1691. Helen Hope then married her cousin Thomas Haddington in 1696 so he was fortunate in that he retained significant parts of his estate then married into the family which had made this possible.¹⁶² The close relations between the two families suggest that there were various options, both suggested and supported by women, to safeguard property and address debt. However, it is possible that these noblewomen considered more than just family interest. Just because they were excluded from formal political activity can it ever be accurate to state that political concerns and ideas had absolutely no impact on their actions and choices?

The earl of Haddington's tutors are named in the family history and mention is made of the influence of his aunt Susanna's husband, Cockburn of Ormiston. The Earl is said to have, 'imbibed his political interests', from Cockburn and that at one time Cockburn 'openly boasted' of having both the earls of Rothes and Haddington 'in his hand'.¹⁶³ As the earl was only five when his father died it is important to acknowledge the influence of his tutors. In this instance Cockburn is credited with assuming the role of mentor and

¹⁶¹ Fraser, *Haddington, I*, pp. 243-244. The sixth earl of Haddington's aunt also gave up her claim to a family annuity in the period of her nephews affairs being arranged which suggests women in the family could, and did, ease the pressure financially by foregoing the payments which were due to them, Fraser, *Haddington, I* p. 220 and Leslie, *Leslie, II*, p. 122.

¹⁶² Leslie, *Leslie, II*, p. 243. The financial issues appear to be quite complex but the involvement of the Hopetoun family and the acknowledgment that these families enjoyed a close relationship suggests how noblewomen in the family understood the complex legal and financial issues and also involved themselves in finding solutions to these problems.

¹⁶³ Leslie, *Leslie, II*, p. 249.

instilling a knowledge of politics in these young men. However, the women in this family demonstrate through their actions that they too had a significant role to play in preserving the line, maintaining the estate and managing the finances. The chapters that follow will illustrate that noblewomen, engaged in these activities, can be understood as being not only politically aware but often politically engaged.

Politics, both formal and social, was something which underpinned the lives of noblewomen just as it did the lives of noblemen. Understanding politics as an intrinsic part of noble life suggests the involvement of women albeit to lesser or greater degrees. If we can credit noblewomen with the ability to secure and maintain the family, as the women within the *squadron* certainly did, then it is reasonable to assume they too had a knowledge of legislation, the economy, succession or any number of political issues. Left in charge of young men with a political duty ahead of them it is unreasonable to assume noblewomen had no impact on the formation of political awareness in their offspring. Without firm evidence it would be rash to credit noblewomen with a level of political influence they did not possess. It is arguable, however, that there is a middle ground, a level of female ability that has been overlooked in the persistent view that politics was an exclusively male and formal activity. If politics can be redefined as intrinsic to all nobles within the family, both social and formal, then noblewomen can no longer be excluded.

Acknowledging that the families within the *squadron* were linked by ‘ties of kin’ is accurate but it does not explain why these families formed a political group. Recognising the important role noblewomen had in making these connections and preserving the interests of the families does more than just delineate the origins of this group. It reminds us that noblewomen were not rigidly confined to a domestic sphere and, if they had to or chose to, noblewomen could steer a family through difficulties just

as ably as men. This alone should alert us to the possibilities of noblewomen's ability to influence. Whatever their level of engagement or activity it is important to identify their input and achievements. Only then can a group such as the *squadron*, or any political party, be properly understood.

Conclusion

Ensuring the continuance of a noble line was one of the most important duties of noblemen encouraging them to marry, sire an heir and secure the future of the family.¹⁶⁴ The equal importance of other marriages in the family should not be overlooked because the marriages of siblings also had the potential to create alliances, promote the family interest and so further the influence and power of magnate families.¹⁶⁵ This chapter has demonstrated that far from being marginalised as mere pawns in the marriage market noblewomen can be seen as important players in their own right. The continuance of some families could fall to them alone and rarely did they neglect their duty. Noblewomen could act independently making their own choices and protecting their children and private interests. Women as wives could provide husbands with the most trusted of partners. In a period where the pressures of revolution and then union impacted on an emerging political system the role of women encompassed many features including dissemination of information, personal advisor and confidante as well as experience in managing the social aspects of politics. A vital part of all of these roles was the reliance on women to manage and maintain networks. Their ability to mediate between important political players and facilitate the creation and unity of political

¹⁶⁴ Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English*, p. 390.

¹⁶⁵ Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English*, p. 390.

groupings should not be overlooked in a period which witnessed the emergence of party politics.

Chapter 2

The Letter Writing of Scottish Noblewomen.

The letters of Scottish noblewomen provide a valuable resource for revealing the practical aspects of noblewomen's lives. Letters describe events or experiences and depict female roles within the family and society. Letters can illuminate noblewomen's beliefs, opinions and decisions and sometimes reveal their personal thoughts and emotions. Although Scottish noblewomen in the period 1688 -1707 have been overlooked within political histories their surviving letters have not been completely disregarded. These sources have allowed particular noblewomen to be the subject of various studies and others have at least been included in family histories.¹ The growing recognition that women have a legitimate place in history has meant that Scottish noblewomen's letters have proved essential to an increasing number of recent studies.²

¹ In studying the letter writing of early modern English women James Daybell draws attention to the, 'Rankean focus on diplomacy and politics which has rendered women's history to no more than biography of exceptional or worthy women', see Daybell, *Women Letter Writers*, pp. 7-9. In Scottish history much work has been carried out using noblewomen's letters but they rarely feature within political history, Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*; Marshall, *Duchess Anne*; Brown, *Noble Society*; von den Steinen, 'Women's Political Activism'. Much older studies concerned with women include, Baillie, *Metrical Legends*; Stanhope, *Memoirs*; Lindsay, *Countess of Balcarres*; Graham, 'A Bundle of Jacobite Letters'. Various family histories have women featuring occasionally throughout and these include, Lindsay, *Lives of the Lindsays*; Fraser, *The Earls of Cromartie*; Fraser, *Annandale Book*; Warrender, *Marchmont and Humes*; Atholl, *Chronicles*.

² Recent work includes, Barclay, 'Negotiating Patriarchy'; Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power*; Carr, 'National Identity'; R. Carr, 'Female Correspondence and Early Modern Scottish Political History, a Case Study of the Anglo-Scottish Union', in *Historical Reflections*, Vol. 37, No. 2. (Summer, 2011), pp. 39-57; McGrigor, *Countess of the Covenant*; Macaulay, *Prisoner of St Kilda* and Glover, *Elite Women and Polite Society* are more recent studies using much underutilised material. While not dealing exclusively with noblewomen the work of Stana Nenadic and Leah Leneman is relevant, see S. Nenadic, 'Experience and Expectations'; S. Nenadic, *Lairds and Luxury*; Leneman, *Living in Atholl*; Leneman, *Promises, Promises*. Broader work covering women more generally should be noted including Mullan, *Women's Life Writing*; Meikle, *A British Frontier?*; Abrams et al, *Gender in Scottish History*; Ewan, and Nugent, *Finding the Family*.

Being aware of the rich archival resource noblewomen's letters provide and knowing that so many others have, over many years, read and used these sources is evidence of their value. It is therefore difficult to explain why no comprehensive collections of Scottish noblewomen's letters have been published. Selected female letters have frequently been included in the published correspondences of men, however, complete collections and correspondences have failed to be recognised as worthy of fuller exploration. In many cases this is due to how noblewomen's letters have been regarded and whether they have actually been valued as important enough to preserve and archive.³ Some letters survive only because they were written to important men. This is true of some female correspondents within the Hamilton family.⁴ Many letters written by Susan, Countess of Dundonald sister to James, fourth duke of Hamilton have been preserved but this is mainly because they were *his* letters and not because she had written them. In her letters to her brother she refers to friends, other family members and the health and welfare of her sisters and mother. All of these references suggest she was part of a wide network of relations but few of these letters have been preserved within the Hamilton collection.⁵ Some of Lady Katherine's letters feature in the Hamilton collection but the Atholl family itself has preserved an extensive family archive so her letters, and those of other Hamilton women, can also be found there.⁶

The importance of noblewomen's letters should not be understated. Their letters can provide a variety of information and not only about the women who wrote them.

³ Daybell, *Women Letter Writers*, p. 8.

⁴ NAS GD406 Hamilton Muniments.

⁵ Of 88 surviving letters which were written by Susan, Countess of Dundonald and as Lady Yester within the Hamilton Muniments, NAS GD406, 75 were written to her brother, James fourth duke of Hamilton. The remaining 13 were written to her parents and sister-in-law, Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton. Letters which refer to other family members in a manner that suggests written contact include, NAS GD406/1/9101 Susan, Countess of Dundonald to Earl of Arran, [Edinburgh] 7 March [?]; NAS GD406/1/7367 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran, [Edinburgh] 27 November 1694; NAS GD406/1/7368 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran, [Edinburgh] 20 December 1694; NAS GD406/1/9092 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran, [Edinburgh] 3 January 1695.

⁶ Blair Castle Archive [Blair MS] Boxes 44 and 45 Correspondence of the Duke and Duchess of Atholl between 1684 and 1707.

The opinions and perceptions of noblewomen provide a crucial addition to understanding events which have been largely reported or commented upon by men.⁷ A female perspective adds another dimension to accepted knowledge and a fundamental part of this study is to add an additional perception on the Revolution and the Union. As well as adding a new perspective letters can provide something more. Natalie Zemon Davis argues that letters have to be understood not only in terms of what they reported but how both men and women ‘told their stories’.⁸ Considering the way letters were constructed, examining the language that was used, interpreting the tone and establishing the broader implications are all necessary in gaining the most from these sources. In many instances letters written by Scottish noblewomen have been lost and the exclusion of even high status noblewomen from what were considered male spheres, such as politics or religious administration, means that surviving reports by noblewomen are rarely firsthand accounts. Finding ways to glean the very most from the limited sources which remain is a challenge and necessitates using the approach advocated by Zemon Davis and others. Work based on these principles has been carried out for European and English women’s letter writing.⁹ Applying some of these techniques to Scottish noblewomen’s letters will allow for a different perspective on the post Revolution and Union period to emerge. It will also demonstrate noblewomen’s concerns, ideas and reactions to events. Textual analysis allows a more subtle

⁷ Daybell, *Women’s Letter Writing*, p. 8.

⁸ N. Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 1-6.

⁹ J. Couchman and A. Crabb (eds.), *Women’s Letters Across Europe, 1400-1700, Form and Persuasion* (Aldershot, 2005); Daybell, *Women’s Letter Writing*, pp. 1-15; Daybell, *Women Letter-Writers*; Whyman, *Sociability and Power*; S. Whyman, *The Pen and the People, English Letter Writers 1660-1800* (Oxford, 2009); S. Trill, *Lady Anne Halkett: Selected Self-Writings* (Aldershot, 2007); R. O’Day, *Cassandra Brydges (1670-1735) First Duchess of Chandos* (Suffolk, 2007); E. Hobby, *Virtue of Necessity English Women’s Writing 1649-88* (London, 1988). Some studies deal with more general writing but include discussions of letter writing see Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her*; D. Robin, *Publishing Women Salons, the Presses and the Counter Reformation in Sixteenth Century Italy* (Chicago, 2007) and D. Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters* (New York, 2009).

interpretation of the sources and can suggest far more about the position, and influence, of noblewomen than reading letters as only reports.

James Daybell discusses the many ways to approach letters including methods that are historical, literary or gender based.¹⁰ He outlines the way letters can reveal social details about women's lives, illustrate women's literary proficiency and also demonstrate how women's roles and relationships functioned. Letters also reveal how women engaged in various activities including those which were social, religious, literary or political. Through analysis of letters it is possible to discern women's personal self-expression and this can be separated from the, 'calculated writing methods or conventions', of their period.¹¹ Their self representation, or the 'projected personas' which women generated through their writing, become apparent when we compare different kinds of letters. For example, letters seeking favour followed certain formulaic standards of deference, submission and regard for status in pursuing patronage. If we contrast these with personal letters, written with emotion and private reflection, it suggests the reality of two female personas, one which complied with patriarchal expectations and social standards and another which expressed female individuality and character.¹² Historical analysis of letters reveals a female perspective on contemporary events. Literary examination will include a brief consideration of noblewomen's education and the conventions of letter writing. Comparing and contrasting Scottish noblewomen's letters with both male and female contemporaries can provide an idea of the skills and abilities noblewomen utilised. Letters which dealt with estate management or those relating to legal or financial aspects will be explored in a further chapter. Noblewomen seeking patronage will also be examined in a separate chapter

¹⁰ Daybell, *Women's Letter Writing*, p. 3.

¹¹ Daybell, *Women's Letter Writing*, p. 3.

¹² Daybell, *Women's Letter Writing*, pp. 3-4.

paying particular attention to the way noblewomen portrayed themselves in these letters.

A comprehensive gender approach will not be undertaken here although an awareness of gender in regard to status is worth noting.¹³ The elite status of Scottish noblewomen helped them transcend the gender constraints faced by the majority of women in Scotland; however, remaining within patriarchal parameters was vital.¹⁴ Letters can reveal how this was achieved, especially personal letters between husbands and wives which will be used here to explore the unique partnerships some couples developed and which highlight the parity in some relationships. Using personal letters in this way emphasizes the contrast between how couples actually behaved in private and how they chose to appear in public. Comparing and contrasting letters between both male and female correspondents and those of differing status is also important. How noblewomen related to other women and how this differed from their literary contact with men can help us obtain an idea of how women managed their relationships and operated within large networks of kin. These sources demonstrate that Scottish noblewomen developed an 'epistolary armoury' which they utilised in a bid to improve their family interest, influence family members or secure favours and support.¹⁵ Assessing and acknowledging the importance of epistolary activity will place Scottish noblewomen in relation to their contemporaries and provide further evidence of their involvement in spheres of activity previously considered exclusively male.

¹³ M. E. Wiesner-Hanks, 'Structures and Meanings in a Gendered Family History', in M. E. Wiesner-Hanks and T. Meade, (eds.) *A Companion to Gender History* (Oxford, 2004).

¹⁴ Brown, *Noble Society*, pp. 78-79; Daybell, *Women's Letter Writing*, p. 10.

¹⁵ For the concept of 'epistolary armoury', when female writers cultivated connections and networks through letter writing and then managed and maintained these for future use, see, V. Larminie, 'Fighting for Family in a Patronage Society: the Epistolary Armoury of Anne Newdigate (1574-1618)' in Daybell, *Women's Letter Writing*, p. 11.

Noblewomen Writing

There was no formal model of education for Scottish noblewomen of the period 1688 - 1707 and their instruction in various disciplines appears to be haphazard and dependent on their circumstances. By this period reading was considered important so that women, as well as men, could study the Bible.¹⁶ Lady Katherine described how her children were set a Bible text to read and learn by heart every day and her own ability to study the Bible extensively is evidenced by her detailed religious journal.¹⁷ While it was desirable that women should read, learning to write well did not necessarily follow. Examples of Scottish noblewomen's writing show it to be 'laborious' with, 'phonetic and irregular spelling', as well as 'erratic syntax', placing them at a disadvantage with their 'much more literate' husbands.¹⁸ In 1795 Elizabeth Mure wrote about the 'changes of manners' as she interpreted them from 1700. She believed that Scottish women in previous generations to her own paid no attention to accomplishments such as, 'reading and writing well' and that accurate spelling, 'was never thought of'.¹⁹ In her opinion the, 'bookseller's shoppes were not stuffed as they are now with Novels and Magazines', and she believed that, 'wemen's knowledge was gain'd by conversing with the men not by reading themselves'.²⁰ She also understood that men would prefer to instruct women on appropriate material and not allow them to read, 'an ill choisen book by their own hand'. Overall her short essay indicates a shift from learning religious and devotional material by heart from mothers and chaplains to increased reading and general education.

¹⁶ Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, pp. 128-129.

¹⁷ Blair Castle Archive [Blair MS] 29.11.1-5

¹⁸ Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, pp. 126-127.

¹⁹ Elizabeth Mure, 'Some Remarks on the Change of Manners in my Own Time. 1700-1790', in W. Mure, (Ed) *Selections from the Family Papers preserved at Caldwell* (Vol. I, Glasgow, 1854), pp. 259-272. Elizabeth Mure died in 1795 and the introduction to her essay suggests this was written towards the end of her life. See also Glover, *Elite Women in Polite Society*, pp. 24-49.

²⁰ Mure, 'Change of Manners', p. 269.

The letters of Christian Carnegie, duchess of Montrose (d. 1744), highlight deficient literary standards as her spelling and language can be assessed as quite poor. She addressed her husband as ‘My Dear Heart’ and in 1709 wrote that she had received his letter from his journey south and was glad he had reached, ‘Stamfoord... it is a gret marsey you ar sefe that lenth and a mighty satisfaxcion to mi to know it’.²¹ She clearly valued her correspondence with her husband and continued, ‘I shal not dout you wile bi so kind as nou to lete mi heve the pleser of a leter from you every post’, and she assured him, ‘I shal not neglek to wret tho I supoes thay can be no weayes devert you with noues [news]’.²² In spite of her poor writing she provided her husband with news and like many other wives hoped for his return from business or Parliament. In November 1709 she wrote, ‘I can hardly alou my selef to think of a short parlement for fear I bi diesapounted as my Lady Steres [Stairs] is who thought to heve sien hear [her] lord hear [here]’.²³ Whether she had seen Lady Stairs in person or whether she was another correspondent is not clear. The Duchess’ interest in news is evident and in another letter she made one ‘pitesen [petition]’ of her husband to have someone, ‘prived [provide] for mi the tattler and that youl place pout it upe with your leter to mi’, she explained that she could not, ‘git it hear excepe when my lady Northeske aloues mi a sight of hieres’.²⁴ This request for printed news suggests women certainly had reading skills, and a shared interest in the printed papers of the day, even if their writing was less than perfected. It also supports Elizabeth Mure’s observations on men sharing knowledge with women and although Mure suggested men could control what women read it would have been

²¹ NAS GD220/5/215/4 Christian Carnegie, Duchess of Montrose to Duke of Montrose, [Edinburgh] 24 November 1709; Paul, *Scots Peerage VI*, pp. 260-265.

²² NAS GD220/5/215/4 Christian Carnegie, Duchess of Montrose to Duke of Montrose, [Edinburgh] 24 November 1709.

²³ NAS GD220/5/215/6 Christian Carnegie, Duchess of Montrose to Duke of Montrose, [Edinburgh] 6 December 1709.

²⁴ NAS GD220/5/215/8 Christian Carnegie, Duchess of Montrose to Duke of Montrose, [Edinburgh] 12 December 1709.

in their own interests to have well informed wives with good literary capabilities.²⁵ The writing of some men was equally poor although they rarely apologised for it. The Duke of Hamilton's letters show an untidy, scrawling script and frequent discrepancies in spelling. The polite influence on manners and accomplishments that Mure notes supports her assertion that spelling and writing well, at the turn of the century at least, was just not thought of.

Keith Brown discusses the kind of education that young noble men required and how Scottish universities, although, 'on the outer rim of Europe', were attuned to what was going on in Italy, France and Germany. Brown also states that Scots did not have the prejudice against foreign travel that existed in England from the 1570s onwards and in this early period Scots were 'cosmopolitan Europeans'.²⁶ Brown concludes that Scots nobility adapted to change, in that less martial qualities were being adopted in order to gain advancement and nobles were educating themselves with a view to, 'retooling themselves for state service'.²⁷ Noblewomen were not granted an extensive education and rarely travelled to London. The cost and difficulties of travel prevented them from joining their husbands and they were required to stay at home and manage affairs in the absence of their husbands.²⁸ This situation is paradoxical as it suggests noblewomen clearly required adequate literacy and numeracy skills but curiously this did not compel parents to provide their daughters with a formal education. How did young Scottish noblewomen learn all that was required of them?

Nobles gained a great deal of their education in the domestic sphere within the household but where other avenues such as schools, tutors and university education

²⁵ Katherine Glover points out that girls in the eighteenth century learned to read but, 'writing was taught much later'. Glover was discussing women's writing abilities c.1740 and notes that the mothers and grandmothers of young girls would have had much poorer skills. The letters used here certainly supports this assessment, Glover, *Elite Women and Polite Society*, p. 28.

²⁶ Brown, *Noble Society*, p. 193.

²⁷ Brown, *Noble Society*, p. 201.

²⁸ Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, pp. 126-127. Brown, 'The Scottish Aristocracy', pp. 543-576

were available to men, women remained at home. Uncovering the educational experiences of Scottish children is difficult owing to the lack of Scottish literature advice on the subject.²⁹ The geographical and financial difficulties which prevented Scottish noblewomen from accompanying their husbands to Edinburgh or London perhaps made some contribution to their literary deficiencies. The opportunity to improve their skills, at least by contrasting their skills with other women, was probably reduced by remaining on remote estates and there is evidence that noblewomen were aware of their poor writing. Mary, Marchioness of Douglas, wrote to her father to give an account of her mother's death but apologised as, 'I nether spells well not wrytts distinktly'.³⁰ Christian, Duchess of Montrose, was keen to record all the messages of good will sent to her husband from his son, David, but admitted, 'that it wer a hard taske to wret them al but I blive hi thinks it is obliging to both you and mi.'³¹ This reveals children receiving instruction from their mothers and those who wrote with parents or added notes to letters were clearly being informally taught.

The daughter of the fourth duke of Hamilton, Lady Mary, was brought up by her grandmother, Duchess Anne, and wrote letters to her father at a young age. David Crawford, the Hamilton secretary, wrote the letter and included a page of the child's scribbles. Lady Mary begged her father to come home to her and at least two letters in 1695 instructed him to bring her 'a good mama'.³² The child's mother had died at her birth in 1690 which was why she was at Hamilton. Even the youngest female in the Duke's life was employed in a literary attempt to influence him by requesting his return

²⁹ Glover, *Elite Women in Polite Society*, pp. 24-49; Brown, *Noble Society*, pp. 181-183.

³⁰ NAS GD40/9/128 Mary, Marchioness of Douglas to her father, Earl of Lothian, [?] [n.d.] April 1701.

³¹ NAS GD220/5/215/6 Christian Carnegie, Duchess of Montrose, to Duke of Montrose, [Edinburgh] 6 December 1709.

³² NAS GD406/1/6464 Lady Mary Hamilton, to her father Earl of Arran, [Hamilton] 29 March 1695; NAS GD406/1/9119, Lady Mary Hamilton, to her father, Earl of Arran, [Hamilton] 5 August 1695; NAS GD406/1/6466 Lady Mary Hamilton, to her father Earl of Arran, [Hamilton] 20 September 1695; NAS GD406/1/6465, Lady Mary Hamilton, to her father Earl of Arran, [Holyroodhouse] 16 November 1695.

to Scotland to settle with a suitable wife. The blossoming literary ability of the granddaughter of Duchess Anne was encouraged with tutors for reading and writing and by the age of seven, just before her death from smallpox, she had begun learning French and Latin.³³ It had become more fashionable by this time to teach girls languages, as it was understood to help them with their English, so Duchess Anne provided this for her grandchildren.³⁴ Her own daughters had not benefitted from language tuition although their education was reasonably extensive, as befitted their status.

Noblewomen's letters exemplify a range of literacy levels from those with poor abilities to exceptional female writers involved in sophisticated literary networks. Noblewomen may have used a secretary and often conceded that others would inform their recipient of news or information but this was not just because they may have lacked effective writing skills themselves. Secretaries provided practical help when the volume of correspondence was too great for one person to manage and were often used by men to inform their wives. Noblewomen wrote in tandem to their husbands with factors on their estates or exchanges were carried out through secretaries if necessary.³⁵ Noblewomen with varying levels of literary ability were not deterred by their lack of ability and their correct usage of appropriate greetings and propriety demonstrates their knowledge of etiquette. Letters which petitioned others for favours and those which were concerned with business matters illustrate noblewomen's use of letter writing conventions and also demonstrate the practical application of their education. Personal letters give a useful insight into the relationships of noblemen and women of the period. Contemporary character sketches of prominent men have provided useful background

³³ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 214-215.

³⁴ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 146-147.

³⁵ Blair MS 45.(2).137 Patrick Scott, on behalf of Earl of Tullibardine, to Countess of Tullibardine, [Edinburgh] 10 June 1702; Blair MS 45.(3).50 Patrick Scott to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Edinburgh] 19 April 1705. David Crawford was secretary to Duchess Anne of Hamilton, Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p. 43.

information on the personalities and temperaments of major political players.³⁶

Examining the letters they sent their wives and family can provide another perspective on the personality and abilities of important political players. These exchanges can reveal how couples operated and also indicate how much influence and authority noblewomen might achieve.

Personal Letters.

In 1698 James, fourth duke of Hamilton, married his second English wife, Lady Elizabeth Gerard and they settled at Kinneil near Edinburgh. A short series of letters illustrates their relationship through their writing. In 1702 Hamilton was returning home to Kinneil from England and wrote to inform his wife. The Duke wrote affectionately, 'I assure you no bodie living ever loved any more than I doe you', and continued that he would write more fully on his Scottish affairs and that he, 'would make all the haste to see you I can'.³⁷ The Duchess returned his affectionate greetings, inquired after his health and addressed him as 'my Jewell' and 'Dearest Life'.³⁸ The terms of endearment used might suggest affection but gauging the quality of relationships from such evidence is not clear-cut. Marriages obviously changed over time and while gender constraints and patriarchal control had an impact on relationships other factors also

³⁶ Mackay, *Memoirs of the Secret Services*; Lockhart, *Memoirs Concerning the Affairs of Scotland*.

³⁷ NAS GD406/1/7132 James, Duke of Hamilton to Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton, [Kendall] 12 March 1702.

³⁸ NASV GD406/1/6888 Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton, to James, Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 24 January 1704; NAS GD406/1/6889, Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton, to James, Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 30 January 1704; NAS GD406/1/6896, Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton, to James, Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 11 February 1704. Her use of 'my Jewell' as an endearment is the only reference to this I have found so far, it may have particular English origins or may be original and used by her alone. 'Dear Heart' was employed by the Earl of Lothian to his wife, NAS GD40/2/8/22 Earl of Lothian to Anne, Lady Lothian, [?] 8 January 1680 and 'My Dearest Life' was always used by the Earl of Mar to his wife NAS GD124/15/231/1-17 series of letters from Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar [Edinburgh] 1704-1705.

need consideration, such as age or status.³⁹ In the case of Hamilton and his wife their apparent affection was customary within their letter writing but closer examination of their letters suggests these writing conventions concealed some marital problems.

The Duke's devoted tone and language contradicts the fact that although he was returning to Scotland he was not immediately going to his wife. Business came first and he travelled from his Lancashire estates to avoid being in London at that time.⁴⁰ This had caused the family immense trouble. Persuading Hamilton to act in the family's best interest was not an easy matter and he procrastinated over going to Edinburgh or London.⁴¹ Torn over where his loyalties should lie the Duke's behaviour was never easy to fathom but in this instance he needed the support of his wife. He wrote as a post script:

I have given itt out that the reason I make such haste into
Scotland is to see our children who are not verie well I pray
God ther may not bee to much reason for itt but its proper
you and I say the same thing...⁴²

The Duke needed his wife's help to ensure that any comments about his swift return to Scotland were countered with a suitable response from her which suggests she, like other noblewomen, managed a significant network of correspondents. The importance of a joint response ensured his affectionate tone and the promise that he would visit her soon. In his second wife Hamilton had not found the loving and

³⁹ Daybell, *Women Letter Writers*, pp. 210-211; Daybell, *Women's Letter Writing*, pp. 8-9.

⁴⁰ Gregg, *Queen Anne*, pp. 128-129.

⁴¹ Various correspondents urged the Duke to return to Edinburgh when news came of the King's illness and death, see NAS GD406/1/4936, Marquis of Tweeddale, to James, Duke of Hamilton, [Edinburgh] 11 March 1702; NAS GD406/1/4978, Lord Yester, to James, Duke of Hamilton, [Edinburgh] 11 March 1702; NAS GD406/1/4901, Lord Yester to James, Duke of Hamilton, [?] 27 March 1702; NAS GD406/1/4982, Roderick MacKenzie to James, Duke of Hamilton, [Edinburgh] 13 March 1702 and NAS GD406/1/4985, Lord Yester to James, Duke of Hamilton, [Edinburgh] 13 March 1702. NAS GD406/1/4984 Sir Patrick Home to James, Duke of Hamilton, and [Edinburgh] 13 March 1702, urged the Duke to go to London.

³⁹ NAS GD406/1/7132 James, Duke of Hamilton, to Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton, [Kendall] 12 March 1702.

supportive nature of his first wife, Lady Anne Spencer. While the young Duchess professed her love for him she was petulant and unable to hide her true feelings. She was young and unhappy at being separated from her family.⁴³ Left alone at Kinneil she sent letters to Hamilton in Edinburgh with loving sentiments and appropriate enquiries into his welfare and health. As well as these the Duchess sent him small gifts of butter and flowers from the garden.⁴⁴ A constant written reminder of affection and small domestic affairs were probably part of her attempt to entice her husband home. Matters of the household and small incidents were recounted but some had an underlying significance. In reporting a fire in their home she described her fear and reaction but queried, 'if you have papers or anything here to be secure'd I wish you wou'd trust me at any time there falls out any thing like this'.⁴⁵ This request suggests the Duchess was not trusted with her husband's private business and she was not allowed access to papers nor have control of family matters while he was absent.

While the Duke remained away from his wife her greatest concern was luring him home. She wrote in January 1704 that she had heard he had hurt his head, 'wch frightens me mightily', and she wished he would settle at home. She also worried that if he did not then, 'twill be out of Dr Pittcairn's ...power to help you'.⁴⁶ The Duchess actually disliked Pitcairn and in a further letter she confronted her husband over this.

I'm not inclinable to come to Edinburgh: if I do I'l make some bargains with you, the first is to quit Dr Pittcairn for I hate his name, for your health you'l alwaies tell me 'tis better but give me leave to say I believe you

⁴³ This had been an issue when pursuing marriage negotiations for the fourth duke that prospective English brides would not want to settle in Scotland, Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 216-219.

⁴⁴ NAS GD406/1/6898 Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton, to James, Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 16 February, 1704; NAS GD406/1/6899, Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton, to James, Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 23 February 1704.

⁴⁵ NAS GD406/1/6894 Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton, to James, Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 23 February 1704.

⁴⁶ NAS GD406/1/6888 Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton, to James, Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 24 January 1704.

upon all subjects but that...⁴⁷

She used the issue of his doctor as a way to bargain with her husband over being in Edinburgh and this illustrates her defying her husband by openly expressing dislike of those around him. Her tone was argumentative but, like those who blame advisors and not the monarch, she restrained herself from accusing her husband and saw the fault in others. Writing in February 1704 she acknowledged the Duke's upset over a previous letter but chose to blame his family for this. She wrote:

I am mighty sorry my letter shou'd have put you out of humour for no part of it was meant to you, & for your family I'm sure those of it that don't care for me have not the gift of justice in 'em, for I discharge my duty in having a due regard to them⁴⁸

The Duchess' attitude to her husband's family was one of general unhappiness created by his need to attend to family matters which she felt excluded from. Whether he deliberately excluded her or she herself refused to engage with the family is not clear. Hamilton wrote to his mother, Duchess Anne, to inform her of his wife's disobedience in returning to Kinneil from Edinburgh in July of 1703 without his permission. The Duke then accused his wife of neglecting their children writing, 'to my sorrow I think she cares but little for them'.⁴⁹ Hamilton frequently complained in his letters about the difficulties he faced and grumbled to his mother but it seems he and his wife both, 'had shallow natures and enjoyed indulging in self pity'.⁵⁰ The Duchess particularly disliked

⁴⁷ NAS GD406/1/6896 Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton, to James, Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 11 February 1704.

⁴⁸ NAS GD406/1/6890 Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton, to James, Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 1 February 1704.

⁴⁹ NAS GD406/1/7884, James, Duke of Hamilton, to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, [Holyrood] 24 July 1703.

⁵⁰ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p. 219.

her sister-in-law, Lady Katherine, and complained of her influence over Hamilton. In January of 1704 she wrote:

I find Lady Atholl has a mind you should still be the slave of the Cause & would have you in town, but I hope I may have more power than a sister so expect you'll come & settle here till the Parliament & leave her Grace to manage her Politicks I'm sorry she has not Mrs Rigby to tattle to her, then she'd want your company less, I'm far from pleas'd so my dear Adieu.⁵¹

It seems Lady Katherine's interest in politics was not shared by the Duchess. Her expectation that her husband would return to Kinneil has the hint of a command and the language implying that he was the slave of 'the Cause' denigrated his duty and position as leader of the opposition. Further deriding Lady Katherine's politics as 'tattle' which ought to be shared with another woman was either an attempt to relegate female political involvement to the periphery or was a way of excusing her own indifference to politics. The Duchess did not win the struggle to bring her husband home and in February she wrote again to wish, 'you were here upon more accounts than one but I fear your Politick self designing sister will prevail to keep you where you are'.⁵² Lady Katherine was once more the object of the Duchess' anger. Language linking the 'politicks' of her sister-in-law with the idea of being 'self designing' created an image of a manipulative woman or an adversary and someone the Duke was a 'slave' to. The Duchess does not appear to have denigrated Duchess Anne but it seems she perceived the family were trying to manage her husband and that she was losing the battle to do the same.

⁵¹ NAS GD406/1/6889 Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton, to James, Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 30 January 1704.

⁵² NAS GD406/1/6894 Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton, to James, Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 8 February 1704.

The Duke and his wife did become closer but overall failed to develop the deep attachment and shared confidences which indicate many early modern marriages were a partnership.⁵³ Others too were aware that the couple were well-matched only by their similarly difficult personalities. Elizabeth, Duchess of Argyll wrote to Hamilton in 1705 ostensibly to congratulate him on the birth of his son but added that as England has provided him with a wife, an estate and two sons it should perhaps, ‘incline him to an Act of Union’.⁵⁴ This critical appraisal of the Duke’s circumstances illustrates how Lady Argyll used a formulaic letter of congratulations as a vehicle for her more important point on the current political situation. An English wife may have provided the Duke with financial support and sons but a loving, evenly balanced relationship never materialised.

The marriage of the Duke’s sister Katherine, to John Murray, later first duke of Atholl, was a far more devoted and respectful relationship. Their correspondence demonstrates mutual trust through shared experiences although Lady Katherine maintained a level of deference to her husband in line with what society demanded of a wife. She demonstrated this in small ways, for instance by reminding him that his opinion took precedence or by conceding that he would know the best course of action. In reality she voiced her opinion clearly and advised him endlessly.⁵⁵ Their letters reveal her level of involvement in family matters and her religious journal adds another dimension to her literary capabilities.⁵⁶ Her letters to her husband were often filled with piety and devotional meaning which she used to reinforce joint decisions or to

⁵³ Daybell, *Women Letter Writers*, p. 111. Evidence of more harmonious partnerships can be found in various families, see NAS GD40/2 series of letters from Earl of Lothian to Lady Lothian; NAS GD124/15/213/1-17 series of letters from Earl of Mar to Countess of Mar, 1704/5 and NAS GD205/33/3/2 series of letters from George Baillie of Jerviswood and Lady Grisell Baillie.

⁵⁴ NAS GD406/1/7150, Elizabeth, Duchess of Argyll, to James, Duke of Hamilton, [?] 10 April 1705.

⁵⁵ Blair MS Boxes 44 and 45 Correspondence of the Duke and Duchess of Atholl between 1684 and 1707.

⁵⁶ Blair MS 29.II.1-5.

encourage his actions and her view of his duty. That she regarded her role as one of support and as a helpmeet is apparent. However, at times she wrote in haste without reflection and these letters show her immediate reaction to events and reveal her sharp temper.⁵⁷ On being slighted by her father-in-law after a long disagreement within the family she ranted at Atholl, 'I take very ill your fathers going by within half a mile of my nose and not coming in here', and continued, 'if you had married off the dunghill he could have used me no worse'.⁵⁸ By the end of the letter she had returned to a calmer state and stressed how the incident should not upset Atholl but she did not retract her initial reaction. In committing her response to paper and sending the letter she clearly felt her anger was worth expressing, if only privately, to Atholl.

It was this private freedom to express emotions, views and opinions which contradicts the idea that arranged marriages imposed female subjugation.⁵⁹ Comparing Lady Katherine's letters to her husband with letters to female relations demonstrates that she was equally vociferous in her expressions, regardless of gender. An incident which caused Lady Katherine to challenge her sister, Lady Yester, on her husband's behalf indicates her ability to confront others outside of her marriage. Lady Katherine wrote to Lady Yester in 1707:

Im sory we are not like to see you in town, and the more that I have heard a story that I shoud have been glad to have talked with you off, for I am told you said my lord drunk out of Dundee's scull, the last year when he had the highland hunting, & that you knew it to be true for you had it from an eyewitness. I hope you will think it raisonable to let me kno this eye witness, for if they have told the truth they need not be ashamed to owne it, & if it be otherways I think they ought to be made

⁵⁷ Daybell contrasts this kind of writing with women who had time to revise or redraft letters which allowed for a more constructed image to be portrayed, Daybell, *Women's Letter Writing*, p. 8.

⁵⁸ Atholl, *Chronicle*, I, p. 466; Blair MS 45.(1).21 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine [Huntingtower] 23 June 1699.

⁵⁹ Barclay stresses that marriages required an ongoing negotiation of power and domestic issues provided women with the opportunity to challenge the patriarchal balance, see Barclay, *Marriage, Intimacy and Power*, pp. 2-15; Fairchild, *Women in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 67-78; Brown, *Noble Society*, p. 127.

sensible of itt, & I must owne to you I could not have thought a sister of mine would have done so unkindly with me, to have so much as repeated such a story without acquainting me of it. You see I have don otherways by you to lett you know what I have heard of you, so I shall expect your answer, & then you shall kno the truth of the matter...⁶⁰

This letter opened with very a short address and no enquiry after health or welfare. Her tone was indignant and her language accusatory. Lady Katherine tried to correct her sister's conduct by informing her of her displeasure but she offered the chance to put matters right. This was a direct challenge from one sister to another and the response was no less candid if a little more conciliatory. Lady Yester answered:

Dear sister... for that story that you writ of, I did hearer itt when my Lord was at London & contradict itt to in the time that I could not belive itt tho itt was positively said, but doth not think itt convinient to writ the Authour, both on your account & mine, but that ever I said I knew itt to be true, or that I had it from an eye witness, that I could not say, because those that told me was not thier, & for unkindness eather to any of my sisters or brothers, I am not sensible of itt, so shall say no more of the subject till I see you, nor shall I say how much I have on all occasions defended his Grace, for I always had a great opinion of your lord...⁶¹

Lady Yester refused to name the author of the story and denied her part in stating it was true but she adopted a reassuring tone in order to smooth things over. In closing her letter by reiterating her good opinion of Atholl, and also emphasising that their brothers had no cause to think her unkind, she was reminding Lady Katherine of the interests of the wider family which both women valued and which could be damaged by arguments and division. Lady Katherine was not appeased and in a further letter she returned to her theme of not being told about the circulation of this story and then emphasised further details about it to press her point. She finished by writing, 'they have a vast dale

⁶⁰ Atholl, *Chronicle, II*, pp. 51-52; Blair MS 45.(5).106 Katherine, Duchess of Atholl to Susan, Lady Yester [Holyroodhouse] 17 July 1705.

⁶¹ Atholl, *Chronicle, II*, p. 51; Blair MS 45.(5).107 Susan, Lady Yester to Katherine, Duchess of Atholl, [Dagatty] 23 July 1705

of malice that invented this story, & I think they had little kindness that did not acquaint us off it, which is all I shall add now adieu'.⁶² This ungracious ending to a sisterly squabble not only illuminates their relationship but also casts light on others.

Understanding that Lady Katherine was as forthright with other correspondents as she was with her husband allows us to appreciate her personality and her position within the wider family. The female interaction here shows that a semblance of respect and politeness was maintained while both sisters aired their grievances, or defended their actions, in writing. Their mutual attention to preserving the family interest prevented any real division. This highlights how the wider family interest impacted on noblewomen's emotional lives and shows the range of problems they negotiated in the relationships they experienced.⁶³ In only reading Lady Katherine's correspondence with Atholl we could interpret her letters as a means of challenging patriarchal constraints or testing the boundaries of marital deference and obedience.⁶⁴ However, in understanding that she used the same manner, tone and forceful sentiments to her sister, and possibly other relations, then Lady Katherine's behaviour can be given a more rounded appraisal. In this instance personal letters reveal a fuller picture of a female personality rather than one seen only in relation to men.

Noblemen's personal correspondences with their wives and other family members should be read in conjunction with their political letters and state papers. Although formal letters reveal noblemen's political aims and ideas understanding men within their household and family is equally important. Adopting this approach supports the idea that men did not act alone but within a much greater network, networks which obviously included noblewomen. Using noblewomen's letters and private

⁶² Atholl, *Chronicles, II*, p. 52; Blair MS 45.(5).106 Katherine, Duchess of Atholl to Susan, Lady Yester [Holyroodhouse] 28 July 1705.

⁶³ A. Wall, 'Deference and Defiance in Women's letters of the Thynne Family: the Rhetoric of Relationships' in Daybell, *Women's Letter Writing*, pp. 77-93.

⁶⁴ Barclay, 'Negotiating Patriarchy', p. 2-15.

correspondences demonstrates the interaction between both men and women and also the wider family. They also reveal the ‘grey areas’ between the domestic and public sphere which reveals a form of social politics at work in Scotland.⁶⁵

Letters to Women, Letters to Men.

If personal letters between close siblings or couples demonstrate a combination of love and affection, sarcasm or anger as well as advice, sharing, complaining or unhappiness, how do these compare with the way noblewomen wrote to other men and women in their lives? Anne, Lady Blantyre (1658-1722) wrote to her son to admonish him for neglecting his business and affairs.⁶⁶ Lady Blantyre referred to various issues in her letters including the selling of produce and the purchase of suitable land but her son failed to respond. Undeterred she persisted and displayed her impatience with his behaviour, writing, ‘I begg it of you to send an answer to this and doe not neglect it as you have done my former letters and those of your friends’.⁶⁷ Lady Blantyre revealed that she knew her son was being written to by others, probably at her insistence, and he was also ignoring them. She continued more forcefully, writing, ‘I wish I could be as unconcerned in your affairs as you are yourself, it may vex me but I don’t know I can help it’.⁶⁸ Similar letters from Christian Leslie, mother of the fourth Marquis of Montrose, and Robina, Countess of Forfar, lamented the behaviour of their sons and

⁶⁵ Elaine Chalus recognises distinctions in parliamentary cultures between Ireland and England. To reveal the similarly distinct social and political cultures of Scotland the role of noblewomen must be more fully appraised and examined in relation to men, Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 2-20; Brown, *Noble Power*, pp. 238-239.

⁶⁶ NAS GD406/1/11174 Anne, Lady Blantyre to her son, Lord Blantyre, [Crekin?] 18 August 1707; NAS GD406/1/11175 Anne, Lady Blantyre to her son, Lord Blantyre, [Glasgow] 11 February 1708 and NAS GD406/1/11171a Anne, Lady Blantyre to her son, Lord Blantyre, [Edinburgh] 21 April 1709. For Blantyre family see Paul, *Scots Peerage, II*, pp. 87-88.

⁶⁷ NAS GD406/1/11171a Anne, Lady Blantyre to her son Lord Blantyre, [Edinburgh] 21 April 1709.

⁶⁸ NAS GD406/1/11171a Anne, Lady Blantyre to her son Lord Blantyre, [Edinburgh] 21 April 1709.

used the strongest terms to admonish their behaviour.⁶⁹ Lady Forfar involved the Earl of Arran, later Duke of Hamilton, in her affairs and asked him to, ‘inquire into that poor youth’s conduct [her son] and severely reprehend what you find amiss’.⁷⁰ These noblewomen did not keep their opinions to themselves nor did they necessarily keep their attitudes to their sons’ behaviour private.⁷¹ They used letters to gather support in applying pressure on their sons to conform to the standards expected of them. The fate of the entire family rested with the behaviour of the heirs, and mothers rarely failed to remind sons of their duties.

Duchess Anne despaired of the conduct of her son, the fourth Duke, whose attitude and behaviour confounded his parents throughout his life.⁷² Her letters to him, and to her daughters, reveal a great deal about private correspondences between women maintaining and preserving the family interest. She wrote to Lady Katherine in 1705 that she was, ‘grieved at the divisions that are ruining Scotland’, and admitted she hoped Hamilton, as leader of the opposition to union, would, ‘see his present course is wrong’.⁷³ In this letter she was clearly admitting that her opinion was contrary to her son’s and she also confessed her worries over Hamilton and his brother-in-law, Atholl, ‘being at variance’. She implored her daughter to do what she could, ‘to keep them from an open break’, as this, ‘will gratify our enemies’.⁷⁴ The private letters between

⁶⁹ NAS GD220/5/7 Christian Leslie to her son, James fourth Marquis of Montrose, [?] 26 November 1699; NAS GD406/1/5549 Robina, Countess of Forfar to Earl of Arran, [?] 27 December 1709. For Forfar family, see Paul, *Scots Peerage, IV*, pp. 77-79.

⁷⁰ NAS GD406/1/5549 Robina, Countess of Forfar to Earl of Arran, [?] 27 December 1709.

⁷¹ Similar letters can be found relating to the poor conduct and marriage of Lord Grange, brother of James Erskine, sixth earl of Mar, see NAS GD124/15/300 Harry Maule of Kelly to Earl of Mar, [Leith] January-February 1706; NAS GD124/15/308 Earl of Panmure to Earl of Mar, [Brechin Castle] 6 February 1706; NAS GD124/15/318 Lady Napier to Earl of Mar, [?] 20 February 1706. Also the conduct of the son of the Duke of Atholl caused family members to become involved and attempt to persuade him of his duty, NAS GD45/14/245/4 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 4 December 1704; Atholl, *Chronicles, II*, pp. 42-44.

⁷² Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 209-217.

⁷³ Blair MS 45.(5).119, Anne, Duchess of Hamilton to Katherine, Duchess of Atholl, [Hamilton] 7 September 1705.

⁷⁴ Blair MS 45.(5).121, Anne, Duchess of Hamilton to Katherine, Duchess of Atholl, [Hamilton] 11 September 1705.

mothers and daughters can illuminate the frustrations and challenges of relationships within major political families in a way formal letters between male statesmen and political players may not. These letters allowed women some self expression or reflective thought on political issues but they also show that women coped with the threat of division over these problems. However, this role also raised a dilemma for noblewomen. Although they expressed their views in letters they too had to be mindful of publicly condemning the behaviour of male family members.⁷⁵ Orchestrating a modest amount of peer pressure to manipulate a wayward son was quite different from allowing enemies of the family to discover the real conflict within powerful families. Noblewomen used letters to support one another and took the opportunity to express their own opinions but some letters were obviously more private than others.⁷⁶

Noblewomen and the Royal Court.

Noblewomen created a diverse network of associations which, once established, allowed them to pursue, develop and maintain further connections.⁷⁷ A small collection of letters in the Hamilton family demonstrates how one Scottish noblewoman maintained a female relationship in the household of James VII's wife, Mary of Modena. Eight letters survive between Susan, Lady Cassillis (1638-1694), sister of Duchess Anne, with Mrs Margaret Dawson a bedchamber woman to Queen Mary.⁷⁸ The letters were written between 1682 and 1688 and although this was prior to the

⁷⁵ Daybell, *Women's Letter Writing*, p. 7.

⁷⁶ Lady Katherine noted in a letter to her husband, 'I cannot now writ to you with such freedom not knowing how my letters will goe', see Blair MS 45.(2).92 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Blair] 9 April 1702.

⁷⁷ Larminie, 'Fighting for the Family', in Daybell, *Women's Letter Writing*, pp. 94-95.

⁷⁸ NAS GD25/9/38 M Dawson first bedchamber woman to the Queen to Susan, Countess of Cassilis, 1682-1688; Mrs Margaret Dawson is named as bedchamber woman in *Anglia Notitia* (London, 1676), see M. Haile, *Queen Mary of Modena Her Life and Letters* (London, 1905), p. 43.

Revolution they illustrate how Scottish noblewomen, geographically removed from Court, used their epistolary efforts in a bid to remain well informed.

Mrs Dawson's letters were essentially reports from court requested by Lady Cassilis. The letters mention Lord Kennedy, Lady Cassilis' son, and her husband, John Kennedy, seventh earl of Cassilis (1653-1701), so both of these men were acquainted with Mrs Dawson and she reported on their progress at court.⁷⁹ Mrs Dawson wrote in July of 1684 that she had received Lady Cassilis' letter from Lord Cassilis and, 'within two hours after I recieved it I showed it to her R: H:', meaning she had brought Cassilis' concerns to the attention of the Queen.⁸⁰ This indicates that Mrs Dawson was used as a way of gaining access to the monarch in much the same way that a later favourite, Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, would become an important conduit to those petitioning Queen Anne.⁸¹ However, in this instance it was tactfully reported that Queen Mary, 'understood not the business', but made a very 'gracious answer'.⁸² Mrs Dawson then wrote that she had not seen Lord Cassilis again so assumed, 'he has dun his business som other way', indicating that she hoped he would have more success elsewhere.⁸³ Mrs Dawson understood her role as facilitator in presenting the concerns of the Kennedy family to the Queen but in this instance had not been successful. Despite this she continued to report on other important developments at court.

The 'breeding' of both Queen Mary and Princess Anne were frequently mentioned in her letters and she correctly reported the pregnancies of Queen Mary in

⁷⁹ For the Kennedy family, Paul, *Scots Peerage, II*, pp. 484-485.

⁸⁰ NAS GD25/9/38/3 Mrs Dawson first bedchamber woman to the Queen, to Susan, Countess of Cassillis, [Whitehall] 4 July 1684.

⁸¹ Weil, *Political Passions*, pp. 162-168.

⁸² NAS GD25/9/38/3 Mrs Dawson first bedchamber woman to the Queen, to Susan, Countess of Cassillis, [Whitehall] 4 July 1684.

⁸³ NAS GD25/9/38/3 Mrs Dawson first bedchamber woman to the Queen, to Susan, Countess of Cassillis, [Whitehall] 4 July 1684.

1683 and 1684, as well as the second pregnancy of Princess Anne in that year.⁸⁴ The preoccupation with pregnancy and the speculation surrounding this was due to concerns over the succession. James VII needed to produce an heir and everyone understood the significance of Princess Anne's children if James failed to do so.⁸⁵ A reliable report from someone placed within the household would have been an important source of information. For example, in 1692 Lady Breadalbane wrote to Lady Lothian from London informing her, 'that there are many stories in town of the princess going to syon house.'⁸⁶ This brief remark actually referred to the removal of Princess Anne and her household to Syon House due to increasing tensions between the princess and the reigning monarchs, her brother-in-law William and her sister Mary. The row had escalated because of the prominence of the Marlboroughs in Princess Anne's household and Anne's determination that Mary, although Queen, would not interfere in her affairs.⁸⁷ This letter reiterates the importance of accurate royal news reaching Scotland from court and the general interest that noblewomen had in matters such as the succession or religion. These references are brief and letters containing such references have frequently been deemed 'of no importance' within collections but they actually provide clear indications of women keeping abreast of current affairs.⁸⁸ In the same letter Lady Breadalbane incorrectly reported that Lord George Hamilton was 'dying of decay' which was quite untrue and suggests the need to maintain several reliable sources.

⁸⁴ NAS GD25/9/38/1 Mrs Dawson first bedchamber woman to the Queen, to Susan, Countess of Cassillis, [Whitehall] [?] February 1683 and NAS GD25/9/38/4 Mrs Dawson first bedchamber woman to the Queen, to Susan, Countess of Cassillis, [Whitehall] 2 September 1684.

⁸⁵ Gregg, *Queen Anne*, pp. 26-36.

⁸⁶ NAS GD40/2/7/37 Lady Breadalbane to Lady Lothian, [London] 18 February 1692.

⁸⁷ Gregg, *Queen Anne*, pp. 87-91.

⁸⁸ Daybell states that his work is intended to, 'combat the long term prejudice against women's letters', and deplores collections of women's letters being labelled 'of no importance', see Daybell, *Women Letter Writers*, pp. 4-8.

Mrs Dawson was well placed to obtain accurate news and reported to Lady Cassilis early in 1688 that she had conveyed the Countess' greetings to the Queen and hoped her good wishes would, 'prove especiall about the beginning of July, at present all is well and prospers'.⁸⁹ This was a hint as to the Queen's state of health and in June of 1688 James VII and Queen Mary had a son, James Francis Edward. Mrs Dawson was clearly dependable in her information and dates.

As Duke and Duchess of York, James and his wife had been exiled in Scotland after the 'Popish Plot' of 1678 in order to suppress speculation of a return to Catholicism by Charles II.⁹⁰ There is evidence of a friendship between Mary of Modena and the Hamilton sisters which probably stemmed from their father's life at Court but which continued when the Yorks came to Edinburgh.⁹¹ This extended correspondence within the Queen's royal household is important to note because cultivating these kinds of contacts within large networks has been acknowledged as an integral part of English noblewomen's writing activities.⁹² This brief correspondence is evidence that Scottish noblewomen also understood the importance of these broader networks and receiving accurate news from court.⁹³ Over several important years prior to the Revolution, with speculations on religion and succession issues, Susan, Countess of Cassilis successfully cultivated a female relationship close to the Queen. The surviving letters show a warmth and understanding between the two women but also

⁸⁹ NAS GD25/9/38 Mrs Dawson, first bedchamber woman to the Queen, to Susan, Countess of Cassilis, [Whitehall] 3 February 1688.

⁹⁰ Gregg, *Queen Anne*, pp. 18-21.

⁹¹ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p. 43; NAS GD406/1/10597, Mary, Duchess of York, to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, [Edinburgh] 14 May 1682. This letter regretted that Duchess Anne's recent illness would prevent them from meeting but that Mary was departing for London accompanied by the Countess of Cassilis.

⁹² Larminie discusses the, 'geographically far flung circle of correspondents cultivated by Anne Newdigate (1574-1618) see, Larminie, 'Fighting for Family', in Daybell, *Women Letter Writers*, pp. 94-97

⁹³ The need for noblewomen to maintain links with the political centre or court is also addressed in, S. Chapman, 'Patronage as Family Economy: The Role of Women in the Patron-Client Network of the Phelypeaux de Pontchartrain Family, 1670-1715', *French Historical Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Winter, 2001), pp. 11-35; S. Hanley, 'Engendering the State: Family Formation and State Building in Early Modern France', *French Historical Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1. (Spring, 1989), pp. 4-27.

demonstrate a Scottish noblewoman's successful attempts to gain access to the monarch and information.

What is really surprising is that there is so little evidence of this kind of activity in other noblewomen's letters especially in the years after the Revolution and up to the Union. Any noblewoman present at Court certainly wrote home to Scotland and wives who were left behind in Scotland while their husbands went to London were kept informed of news and progress. However, the direct cultivation of an English correspondent, someone resident at Court, seems unusual for Scottish noblewomen. Mrs Dawson's letters deserve attention simply because none of the other noblewomen in the sample have any surviving evidence of similar connections. Duchess Anne corresponded with her husband while he was at Court and she wrote to Lady Cassilis, her sister. Lady Katherine, if not accompanying her husband to London, also wrote to him and to others, such as her sister-in-law Lady Dunmore, if she was in London. Both Duchess Anne and Lady Katherine wrote to Lady Orkney, wherever she was residing. These examples are all of family relations or marital connections and not associations which can be described as being sought independently with the intention of cultivating a correspondent at Court.⁹⁴

This apparent lack of attention by Scots noblewomen to Court life is intriguing. There is little evidence from the letters used here to suggest Scottish noblewomen cared for life in London or aspired to a place at Court. In many instances the cost of living in London was of more concern than anything else and some noblewomen refused the opportunity to remain at Court in the households of the royal family.⁹⁵ Can their

⁹⁴ Lady Jedburgh wrote to her mother-in-law, Lady Lothian from London to report on Lothian's health but also reported on the Court and the King, writing, 'I shall endeavour to give your ladyship an account of all you are most concerned in', NAS GD40/2/7/76 Lady Jedburgh, to Lady Lothian, [London] 9 March 1698.

⁹⁵ When appointed Secretary of State Lord John Murray, later first duke of Atholl, wrote to his wife that he would have to borrow money to, 'live as a Scots Secretar ought to doe', 29.I.(8).¹⁸ Lord Murray, to

apparent indifference be understood as indicative of their chief concerns: that is of the household and family interest? Why would Scots noblewomen wish to engage with the English Court when they, like many Scots, regarded their seat of power as Edinburgh? England was a foreign country and one in which Scots were frequently resented.⁹⁶

When James VI left Scotland for England in 1603 Scotland lost its ‘unique court culture’ and James established ‘government by pen’ managing affairs from afar. Subsequent monarchs did the same.⁹⁷ James only returned once, in 1617, although he did have many Scots nobles in his entourage. His successor, Charles I, had, ‘no empathy with Scots’, and made only two short visits which were marred by religious tensions. His son, Charles II, had a disastrous experience in Scotland and although crowned there in 1650 after the execution of his father, his subsequent exile abroad until the Restoration contributed to his lack of affinity with Scotland. James VII, as Duke of York, was sent to Scotland in 1679 until 1682 and Scots nobles, ‘flocked to the rejuvenated Court in Edinburgh’, which James and his wife created. However, neither William and Mary nor Queen Anne visited Scotland during their reigns and no monarchs would return until the nineteenth century.⁹⁸

Katherine, Lady Murray, [London] 18 January 1696; Lady Dundonald went to London on account of her son’s health and worried about money as she needed 12 guineas to have his condition addressed and living there was described by her as expensive, see, Blair MS 29.I.(7).154 Susan, Lady Dundonald to Katherine, Lady Murray, [London] 6 July 1695 and Blair MS 29.I.(7).158 Susan, Lady Dundonald to Katherine, Lady Murray, [London] 18 July 1695. Robina, Countess of Forfar, was in contact with men at Court but used the opportunity to make requests regarding finances or for favours. She wished to have these concerns presented to the monarch but did not express any desire to attend Court herself, see NAS GD124/15/641 letters to the Earl of Mar from Robina Countess of Forfar, [?] July-August 1707. An earlier letter suggests that the Robina’s mother-in-law, the Dowager Lady Lockhart, had refused a position at Court saying that she was, ‘not fitt to be a new maid of honour to a queen of sixteen’. This letter is not dated but it is likely that it refers to the marriage of James VII to Mary of Modena in 1673, see NAS GD406/1/11403 Mrs Lockhart to [?] [n.d]. Grisell Hume, daughter of Patrick, first earl of Marchmont, also refused a position at Court. Her family lived in exile before 1688 and Princess Mary, wife of William of Orange, wished her to remain with her as a Maid of Honour on becoming queen. Affection for her family and her wish to remain near her future husband, George Baillie of Jerviswood, were given as the reasons for her refusal, Warrender, *Marchmont*, p. 40

⁹⁶ Keith Brown describes England as a ‘foreign country’ which was also ‘expensive, hundreds of miles away and the Court itself was far more formal’ than James VI’s in Edinburgh had been, Brown, ‘Scottish, Aristocracy, Anglicization’, p. 545.

⁹⁷ R. Oram, *The Kings and Queens of Scotland* (Stroud, 2004).

⁹⁸ Oram, *Kings and Queens*, pp. 229-259.

Exploring the relationship between Scotland's nobility and their monarchs encompasses various issues which include debate and discussions on national identity, the economic state of Scotland and Anglo-Scots relations in general.⁹⁹ The main concern here is to reveal noblewomen's perspectives and ideas on the importance of parliament and Court. The absence of monarchs over many decades is only one contributing factor which suggests parliament in Edinburgh was the main focus for Scots noble families.¹⁰⁰ However, nobles who sought wealth, positions or had particular political ambitions were prepared to go to London. Noblewomen's letters reflect these two perspectives: the importance of local authority and political duty in Scotland but also the wider sense of noble responsibility that could mean residing in London.

John Erskine, sixth earl of Mar was politically ambitious and wrote to his wife hinting that a new position requiring a 'London jurnie' would 'be my fate'. Interestingly he followed this statement with an immediate assurance that his wife could go too, 'if she had a mind'.¹⁰¹ This suggests she had a choice.

A dominant theme in so many letters is one of wives urging nobles to return home.¹⁰² This suggests that the separation that political or courtly life demanded was a

⁹⁹ Allan Macinnes discusses the, 'vogue for New British Histories', and explores various ways to integrate the historiography of Scotland, Ireland, England and Wales in a bid to overcome anglocentric perspectives. He uses examples of Scots from the early seventeenth century who travelled extensively abroad and, 'whose critiques of national and local affairs were enhanced by their experiences beyond the British Isles', see A. Macinnes, *The British Revolution 1629-1660* (Basingstoke, 2005), pp. 1-8. Chris Whatley agrees that, 'Scottish inquisitiveness, travel to England and through Europe inspired emulation', in Scots, although it frequently 'exposed Scotland's inadequacies', C. A. Whatley, 'Scotland at the End of the Seventeenth Century', in Smout, *Anglo-Scottish Relations*, pp. 103-126.

¹⁰⁰ Keith Brown highlights how Scots serving James VI, 'understood the irresistible pull of the court', and that it was, 'impossible to ignore London', but under Charles the court became more formalised and less accessible over time, see, Brown, 'Scottish Aristocracy, Anglicization', pp. 544-545.

¹⁰¹ NAS GD124/15/231/16 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Lady Mar, [Edinburgh] 7 September 1705.

¹⁰² Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton, was constantly wishing her husband would return to her, NAS GD406/1/6888, Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton, to James, Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 24 January 1704; NAS GD406/1/6889, Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton to James, Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 30 January 1704. As mentioned above Hamilton's own mother and daughter wrote to encourage him to return to Scotland and his affairs there. Lady Lothian also encouraged her husband to return home but never pressed him the way the Duchess of Hamilton did, NAS GD40/2/7/66 Lady Lothian to Lothian, [Newbattle] 11 November 1695 and she also comforted her bereaved daughter by assuring her of her father's return from London, NAS GD40/2/7/63 Lady Lothian, to Marchioness of Douglas, [Newbattle] 15 May 1694. The Earl of Mar wrote a series of letters to his wife from Edinburgh in 1704 and 1705 and

real concern to them. Although able and confident managers, the presence of husbands was preferable to the isolation and sheer hard work of managing the family and estates alone. The fact that Scots noblewomen did manage large networks of correspondents and some did travel to Edinburgh or London, if required, shows that they were perfectly capable of assuming these roles. However, it appears that they were, more usually, left behind and the lack of opportunities to associate with English counterparts suggests that their isolation limited their ability to expand networks beyond family connections. Lady Cassilis had the opportunity to be at Court in Edinburgh and maintained the links she established there.

The fact that no other noblewomen in the sample used here have surviving evidence of a similar relationship could point to an insular attitude in Scots noblewomen, an inability to look further than Edinburgh. However, these women did send their sons abroad, some had themselves lived in exile and had experienced other cultures, nearly all were supportive of husbands and sons who sought positions in London, however hard this made their own lives.¹⁰³ Their letters reveal an understanding of life in London and an ability to engage with it, or life in Edinburgh, if necessary but their patriotism and sense of national identity was overwhelmingly Scottish. Some families did embrace London life and politics based at Westminster after 1707 but in the period before union the importance of being in Scotland, especially

although none of her responses survive his reassurances of seeing her soon and returning home indicate this was a major concern in her letters, NAS GD124/15/231, Earl of Mar, to Margaret Countess of Mar, 18 letters, 1704-1705.

¹⁰³ As a young man Lothian had travelled to London not only for business but he understood this as an opportunity to, 'see a little of the world', as this was fitting to his honour, NAS GD40/2/8/9 Lord Kerr of Newbattle, to Lady Kerr, [London] c. 1675. Their own son, Charles, also travelled and wrote to his mother with news, NAS GD40/2/7/28 Lord Charles Kerr, to Lady Lothian, [London] 16 December 1686. Christian Leslie, Marchioness of Montrose wrote to her son on his request to travel by stating that it was having a corrupting effect on his religion and politics. It is not clear if her letter prevented him from continuing, NAS GD220/5/7 Marchioness of Montrose to James, Duke of Montrose [Kinross] 23 November 1699. Atholl was sent to France as a young man and his brothers also wanted to travel, Atholl, *Chronicles, I*, pp. 179, 182. Many of Lady Katherine's religious diary entries were written while she travelled with her husband but a recurring theme in her letters is one of wishing he were at home, Blair MS 29.II.1-5.

for those opposed to union, is reflected very clearly in noblewomen's letters. Including their perspective and using these letters more fully can only enhance our understanding of the Scots nobility and how they understood their future.

Noblewomen as Reporters.

Cultivating connections with those of lesser status to gain information was one way of keeping abreast of news but noblewomen who were at Court used their position to report on events. In 1702 Anna, Countess of Seafield (1672-1708) wrote to her father-in-law, the third earl of Findlater, to inform him of the death of William II.¹⁰⁴

My Lord- I wret this leeter with the sadst hart I everer wrot one. This day about eght aclok in the mornen the King dayed without any disease but perfit wekness. I dou belive his fall from his horse did dou him ill, bot the collar bon which was brok at that time was qut holl. On Tusday last the third of march he lost his stomack, did eat no dinor, had a litell fit of the eago. On Wadsenday he had another fit and on Thoursday a third. Thy war not violint, and that night had a litell lousness, and the nixt day vomited whatever he eat or drunk. His wometing stayed at four aclok, and his phisions thocht that he might requer, for thay all concluded he had no fever or any disese bot weakness. At about four aclok on Seterday he turen so weak that his phisions began to loos ther hops, and he took death to him seleff, told them thy nid not trubell them selives or him with many cordiells, for he doubted not bot he wold day very soon. The Bishops of Canterrebery and Sallasbeary attended him as chaplans, and prayed severall tymes to him on Saterdag, and this day about four or five in the mornen he took the sacrament with much comfort, affterwards spok to soom about him, recomended the ceare of soom of his privat pepirs to Albemarell, and gave his hand to all his frinds about him, and bid them adeu, and imedetly closed his eyes and expayred without any thrack or vielent moshon. He had all his seneses and intellectuals intir till the last minit of his liff. My lord had a short adiens of him on Wadsenday, when he spok very kyndlie to him and of the Scots nashion and mighty fordvard for the uneion. I am shour ther is no honast or Cristien Scotsman bot will be senseabell of the ireparabell loss. God preserive the Protestant church and the liberty of Europ. The Parliament sat yesterday, and past the

¹⁰⁴ Anne, daughter of William Dunbar of Durn married James, fourth earl of Findlater, later first earl of Seafield (1663-1730) and Secretary of State for Scotland under both William II and Queen Anne, for Findlater family see, Paul, *Scots Peerage, IV*, pp. 37-39.

bill of abjuration and anothar. They have sit all this day and ordared that the Prinssess be proclmed Quen, which was down at Whithall and Cheren Cross at four aclok in the afternun. They have voted and adress to hir to continuo in the aleinness and mishers which was concluded by the King, and she has promised to dou so to the English Cunsell.

There sat a Scots Cunsell in this huse today about twalve aclok, and the Doukes of Quenesbery and Argyll and the two Secretarys ware sent to the Prinssess to speak to hir. She required the corination oth of them, and tould that she wold gladly tak ther adress and would go on in to those mishars which his former Magasty had donn, mantin ther religion and liberty. What is donn in Scotland yr Lo. will hear from Edinburgh beter than I can tell, nou when thing is only disayned. I big pardon for this tedious and melancholy leeter and I am yours most affectionately

The melancoly is very great hear and ther is anther frind nor enemy bot outvardly apiers grived in the very looks. Thy acknolig the loss of ther dlivrer under God. Bot God is always strong, when man is weak.

Whithall, March 8th 1702

Pardon this ill wret.

My Lord, if my father and brother be in the countary pray mack exques to them for not writing to them at this tym. I am abell to wret no mor.¹⁰⁵

This personal account of the King's last days gave an extremely comprehensive report of events. The Countess recalled all manner of details on the health and conduct of the dying monarch. She also reported on the religious activities surrounding him and the subsequent parliamentary and legal strategies the death of the King occasioned. She mentioned by name those Scots who were important in the proceedings and even gave the times of certain events as well as the locations in which they took place. What was important to the Countess, and no doubt to those receiving her testimony, is clear. The religious aspects were obviously significant. That prayers were said and the sacrament administered was noted as well as which bishops attended the monarch. The 'honest and Cristien' Scots who would be affected were mentioned and the preservation of the Protestant religion and the liberty of men was referred to twice, both as the dying King's concern and as the new Queen's duty. The lucid behaviour of the King until the last was emphasised, as was his short audience with the Countess' husband and their

¹⁰⁵ NAS GD248/559/36/13 Anne Ogilvy, Countess of Seafield, to the Earl of Findlater, [Whitehall] 8 March 1702.

discussion on the future of the Scots nation and the King's desire to see union accomplished. The writer stressed her own feelings of sorrow and melancholy at the news and also referred to the general grief of the public. She finished with a post script apologising for her writing and also for her inability to write to others.

This letter could be read as one of many accounts of an important event which just happened to be written by noblewoman.¹⁰⁶ In many ways however, it is an example of how noblewomen used the epistolary medium to convey more than just basic information. Numerous accounts of the King's death would have been circulating but specific details imparted through a personally written letter from a reliable source would quash any false reporting. Giving precise dates, times and locations demonstrates the Countess' understanding that these details could vary or be contested. The Countess may have apologised for her poor handwriting but she understood the need to accurately record these details in a personally written letter.

Her letter clearly states the date as the eighth of March 1702, the actual day of the King's death. The Countess had written immediately and this suggests that her letter had not been subject to extensive redrafting or even given much time for reflection.¹⁰⁷ Her sense of sorrow is evident and she opened and closed the letter with these appropriate sentiments. She did, however, pay attention to detail so she was clearly able to overcome any grief to write coherently. She was also aware of the full day's events as the latest time she mentioned was the proclamation of Anne as Queen at four o'clock. Someone spending all day composing a letter might very well miss the most

¹⁰⁶ Blair MS 45.(2).72 Earl of Orkney, to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Kensington] 6 March 1702; Blair MS 45.(2).74 [Brother of Tullibardine?] to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [London] 10 March 1702; Blair MS 45.(2).75 Earl of Orkney to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [London] 10 March, 1702. All of these were reports which came to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine but none from women.

¹⁰⁷ Daybell, *Women's Letter Writing* pp. 8-9.

important events to report. The Countess understood her role as reporter and included as much as she knew and sent her letter as soon as she could.

Although the Countess was reporting hugely important news she did not forget her status nor entirely dispense with typical etiquette in her writing. Her opening greeting was necessarily brief, as her news demanded, and she ended with, 'I am yours most affectionately', before adding a few more distracted lines. She apologised within the letter three times, once for this, 'tedious and melancholy leeter', twice to beg pardon as she deemed it 'ill wret' and yet again to excuse herself for not writing to her father and brother.¹⁰⁸ The Countess also adopted a deferential tone when admitting that she did not know what was happening in Scotland and was confident that Findlater would hear news from Edinburgh, 'better than I can tell'.¹⁰⁹ This phrase is one of several adopted by female writers which suggest their compliance with the gender constraints of the period. Many noblewomen would be the bearers of significant news but equally it was not prudent to promote their self importance in this role. Finding a way to manoeuvre within the restrictions a patriarchal society imposed on them was a far more practical solution and this is evident in women's letter writing.¹¹⁰ The Countess could hardly reduce the impact of her news but in making apologies and showing an awareness of their deficiencies the female letter writer reminded her male recipient that she had not forgotten her place. The self representation of noblewomen in their letters gives a crucial indication of how they understood themselves within society.

Although the Countess did not explicitly state that her letter could be circulated the detail and information it contained would not be meant for the recipient alone. The codicil at the end of her letter suggests that her father and brother at least would share

¹⁰⁸ NAS GD248/559/13 Anne Ogilvy, Countess of Seafeld to the Earl of Findlater, [Whitehall] 8 March 1702.

¹⁰⁹ NAS GD248/559/13 Anne Ogilvy, Countess of Seafeld to the Earl of Findlater, [Whitehall] 8 March 1702

¹¹⁰ Daybell, *Women's Letter Writing*, p. 9; Brown, *Noble Society*, p. 147.

this report. Further examples demonstrate that letters addressed to one recipient would be seen by others. While dealing with an issue in her husband's absence Lady Katherine, wrote to Atholl, '...Dullery came... to whom I shewed your letter to your father, & red that part of mine concerning the Jurisdiccions; we both were very clear it was not fitt to send your letter to him, so I am to keepe it till he returne'.¹¹¹ In a separate instance she again noted that, 'I have seen your brothers letter that he has writ to you; it is most hard to know what to advise you about your coming from Edinburgh'.¹¹² These examples illustrate that noblewomen, as well as providing important reports, might also be privy to information not addressed specifically to them. That Lady Seafield's account of the King's deathbed would not remain strictly private was probably implicit.

Although the Countess mentioned her own personal feelings on the death of the King she aligned her emotions with those of any 'honest Scot'. She was explicit in mentioning issues of religion and liberty again understanding the importance of these to her recipients. She was careful to mention her husband's audience with the King noting how 'kyndlie' he had spoken and so in this way she was dutiful in promoting her family's prominence. That the King mentioned his desire for Union in the course of this brief conversation is another crucial detail which she clearly thought important and so included. The fact that the King had lost none of his faculties was vital as this reinforced his comments as legitimate and his wishes authentic.

This was a noblewoman's perspective on the death of the King. What she considered important in religion, liberty and union, feature here but two further reports to Findlater,

¹¹¹ Blair MS 45.(1).16 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 17 June 1699.

¹¹² Blair MS 45.(1).19 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 19 June 1699.

both from men, did not mention these issues.¹¹³ In this way the Countess' letter is actually the most political of the three. Similar to the Countess' version the men's letters agree on the King's lucidity, on which bishops attended him, that Albemarle was given the King's papers and although not as detailed on his health prior to death there was a general agreement on the cause. Both men differ with the Countess on one detail in that they believe Princess Anne was proclaimed Queen at three o'clock not four. The first writer, John Philp also stated the King died at seven in the morning while the second, J. A. Baird concurred with the Countess. The importance of these times is unclear, whether there was any legal issue concerning business transacted in the last hour of the King's life or the first hour of a new Queen's reign is unspecified, but all three writers noted the time. Philp wrote from Whitehall, as did the Countess but Baird was writing from Edinburgh. His news was second hand although he gave further details, as the Countess had known someone would, on what the reaction was in Edinburgh. Baird also had details on the autopsy of the King. Both men wrote of their grief and the loss to the nation, as had the Countess. The Countess was slightly more detailed however in naming various nobles and in her report on the councils and the religious details. Only the Countess mentioned the need to preserve, 'the Protestant church and the liberty of Europ', and only the Countess wrote of union.¹¹⁴ The Countess was also the only correspondent of these three to apologise for some aspects of her letter and her spelling was undoubtedly poorer than the men's. The men who wrote were not titled and while reasonably deferential in their address to Findlater neither of them felt the need to excuse themselves in the way the Countess did.

¹¹³ J. Grant, *Seafield Correspondence from 1685 to 1708* (Vol. III, Edinburgh, 1912), pp. 350-352, John Philp, to Earl of Findlater, [Whitehall] 8 March 1702 and J. A. Baird to Earl of Findlater, [Edinburgh] 16 March 1702.

¹¹⁴ NAS GD248/559/36/13 Anne Ogilvy, Countess of Seafield, to the Earl of Findlater, [Whitehall] 8 March 1702.

This is one of the key differences in comparing men and women's letters. Not all noblewomen had poor writing skills but in many ways their deference or apologetic tone makes identifying a female author easy. This aspect of female letter writing should not be taken at face value as a simple apology for inadequate ability because a number of motives and customs can account for it.¹¹⁵ Employing apologetic language was a means of recognising rank and social superiority as well as allowing women to project an image of humility to male recipients. Status rather than gender has been recognised as a central motivation of this behaviour and women had to find a balance between, 'decorum, modesty and confidence', in their literary efforts.¹¹⁶ In the case of Lady Seafield she employed enough respect to her father-in-law but maintained her own status as a noblewoman and as the wife of the Secretary of State imparting important news.

Examining Lady Seafield's letter demonstrates that she utilised various literary standards in writing to convey her news. The enormity of this news, however, meant that she did not construct her letter within the more formulaic composition often found. The Countess dispensed with formal greetings and the usual exchanges regarding health and wellbeing. Instead she revealed her own concerns and was probably correct in assuming these were similar to those of the wider population. As the wife of a close advisor to King William and one who had benefited from his patronage she and her husband were, at that time, in a more precarious position.¹¹⁷ The Countess was writing to her husband's father and chose to inform him ahead of her own father and brother. The letter reveals her understanding of the family hierarchy of which she was a part, the prominence of her husband's family over her own and so she demonstrates her knowledge of the political realities of her situation.

¹¹⁵ Daybell, *Women Letter Writers*, pp. 103-104.

¹¹⁶ Daybell, *Women Letter Writers*, p. 103.

¹¹⁷ Grant, *Seafield Correspondence*, pp. xxii-xxv.

Given the nature of her news, the reporting of detail and the letter's recipient it is not easy to categorise this letter as personal. How to distinguish between private and public letters is complicated. As a means of communication that was open to interception and wrongful interpretation it was not always prudent to write everything in a letter. Equally some letters were meant for more than one person as the time taken to inform many people was wasted if family and friends could share news. Sensitive communications sometimes included instructions to destroy a letter once read and yet others completely avoided a sensitive issue with correspondents preferring to wait until they met. Noblewomen played a crucial role in the various private or public networks that existed and this example is one aspect of their letter writing which demonstrates they did more than just report news.

Jacobite Letters

Noblewomen were just as avid for news as they were adept at reporting. Noblewomen of a Jacobite persuasion were no different but generally engaged in public and political life with more caution than those who were content with the post-Revolutionary order. A collection of letters by Margaret, Lady Nairne relate to the Jacobite exploits of her family and the imprisonment of her husband, William Murray, Lord Nairne, and his son after the Rebellion of 1715.¹¹⁸ They demonstrate the ability of Lady Nairne to involve herself wholeheartedly in family business and affairs. The letters illustrate the family's predicament after the '15 and, in reacting to and then dealing effectively with the situation, Lady Nairne is generally considered to have shared her husband's beliefs and

¹¹⁸ Graham, 'A Bundle of Jacobite Letters', pp.11-23.

politics.¹¹⁹ Her letters and behaviour are evidence of her Jacobitism but, like many women, her personal beliefs were rarely overtly expressed. In part this was because committing Jacobite sentiments to paper was obviously highly dangerous.

A collection of letters dating from 1707 and written to Margaret, Countess of Panmure are more expressive of Lady Nairne's earlier views and interests.¹²⁰ This correspondence with the wife of another Jacobite, James Maule, fourth earl of Panmure (1658-1723), might be construed as a possible support network between Jacobite families but this was not clearly expressed at that time. It is much more likely that the family relationships between the women facilitated friendship, mutual support and their correspondence stemmed from earlier associations through marriage. Lady Nairne was married to the brother of John Murray, first duke of Atholl, and so she corresponded with his wife, Lady Katherine. Lady Panmure was Lady Katherine's sister, both daughters of Duchess Anne. These women formed part of a wider female network which included Susan, Countess of Dundonald, another sister of Lady Katherine, and Lady Panmure and which also included their brother's wife, Lady Orkney, and their mother. Katherine's Atholl relatives were also part of this group including Lady Nairne and Catherine, Lady Dunmore, as well as Sophia, Marchioness of Atholl, their mother-in-law.¹²¹ This wide network appears to have accommodated the differing principles at work within the family most notably conflicting Episcopalian and Presbyterian beliefs.

Lady Nairne's ability to influence her family and male relatives to follow her Jacobite principles was deemed dangerous by contemporaries. Atholl is recorded after 1715 as warning male relatives from involving themselves with her. He wrote, 'there cannot be a wors woman', and he blamed her for the, 'ruin of my three sons [by] her

¹¹⁹ Graham, 'A Bundle of Jacobite Letters', p. 21.

¹²⁰ NAS GD45/14/245, 21 letters from Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, 1702-1712.

¹²¹ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, pp. 182-507.

artifices'.¹²² However in the pre Union period Atholl's wife and Lady Nairne appear to have had a cordial relationship and the letters between Lady Nairne and Lady Panmure do not refer to any division in the family. Lady Katherine died suddenly in 1707 and Atholl was clearly unable to keep his sons from sympathising and then joining those in the family, such as his brother Nairne, who had strong Jacobite beliefs. Gauging a noblewoman's ability to influence others, especially their immediate families, is a difficult task and letters alone cannot prove force of personality as a means of measuring this ability.¹²³ What the letters can demonstrate is how these noblewomen expressed their differing political opinions and how they managed the relationships around them. Letters provide an insight into the tensions differences of belief created but the letters themselves also provided a literary outlet for women to express their views. The differences in the family were acknowledged and discussed as letters between Lady Nairne and Lady Panmure illustrate.

In 1702 Lady Nairne wrote wistfully that, 'should a wish bring me where I would I should now be chatting away a winter night with yr ladyship'.¹²⁴ Lady Nairne's letters were informal and often lamented the distance between the two women which prevented them from enjoying, 'the satisfaction of conversing'.¹²⁵ Gossip and family news was interspersed with references to current affairs. Lady Nairne commented that she hoped Lady Katherine would keep her promise and present her sister with another baby, to be called Megie, as she had kept her promise in, 'giving her a Katie'.¹²⁶ Underlying these remarks was the knowledge that Tullibardine was detained in London.

¹²² Graham, 'Bundle of Jacobite Letters', p. 21.

¹²³ Daybell, *Women's Letter Writing*, p. 105.

¹²⁴ NAS GD45/14/245/2 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 22 December 1702.

¹²⁵ NAS GD45/14/245/3 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 20 February 1703.

¹²⁶ NAS GD45/14/245/2 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 22 December 1702.

Lady Nairne suggested Lady Katherine might blame, ‘her failure to multiply their family at the Queen’s door’, as she was responsible for keeping Tullibardine away. She expanded on this theme by suggesting that in compensation the Queen might increase Tullibardine’s wealth and, ‘send him and his friends home with more substantial favours than fine words’, which she believed, ‘was the most part of their cargo last London voyage’.¹²⁷ While this appears to be a cutting observation on Tullibardine’s competence her tone overall was far less abrasive and read with other letters this forthright remark merely suggests Lady Nairne’s manner. She was conversing with a dear friend and talking of a mutual relative so reading these comments as cruel or spiteful could be unfair. She was, however, clearly aware of Tullibardine’s London visits, his business and the more public perception of how successful his political efforts were.

Lady Nairne openly commented on Lady Katherine’s religiosity and again the tone and comments bordered on unkind. As well as remarking that the Duke of Hamilton was, ‘using all his interest to have Presbyterian members chosen to the Parliament’, she referred to Lady Katherine attending Episcopalian services.¹²⁸ Lady Nairne, although forthright, decided she would ‘suspend judgment’ on this matter. However, in letters between noblewomen it is important to consider whether these kinds of remarks were merely idle speculation or if a more difficult issue was being confronted through a literary medium. Atholl’s adherence to Presbyterianism had been questioned in one family letter as his behaviour in London was so odd that he, ‘was taken for a Jacobite’.¹²⁹ The inclinations of the family towards either Episcopalian or

¹²⁷ NAS GD45/14/245/2 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 22 December 1702.

¹²⁸ NAS GD45/14/245/2 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 22 December 1702.

¹²⁹ In December of 1703 Orkney wrote to his brother the Duke of Hamilton from London giving him news of Queensberry but also hinting at the perceived inadequacies of Atholl who Orkney stated had,

Presbyterian principles was an important one and the correspondence between close family relations regarding these subjects cannot be seen as entirely innocuous. Lady Nairne and Lady Panmure were fated to become hugely involved, and adversely affected, by Jacobitism. In showing an awareness of such issues within the Atholl family these letters reveal the choices and options women had, as well as the possible impact of pursuing their own personal convictions. In attempting to gauge the religious inclination of noblewomen or their commitment to Jacobitism it is worth searching these letters for the clues which reveal that women adopted a fluid approach to such issues. Noblewomen, like men, understood the importance of being able to change direction, loyalty or shift allegiance in order to survive. Later events would, for some noblewomen, allow them to make a clear commitment to Jacobitism but while it was imprudent to do so, they did what was necessary to maintain various options.

The letters between Lady Nairne and Lady Panmure which predate the rising of 1715 include numerous references to events which troubled many people at that time. As well as discussing what engaged the men of the family - London visits, Parliament, regimental business or the issues of religion - Lady Nairne made reference in her letters to openly arguing with her relatives on these matters. In February of 1703 she commented that in spending time at Dunkeld with Lady Katherine, 'many and many a dispute has she and I had this while past,' and Lady Nairne wished she had Lady Panmure's help in, 'winning her case'.¹³⁰ She alluded to, 'the goodness of the cause', and that this strengthened her to, 'bear up agt all our adversary's and come off in my opinion with advantage'.¹³¹ Lady Nairne mentioned another family argument in a letter

'arrived in town but is so generally taken for a Jacobite and understands the court so little he needs help', see NAS GD406/1/7292, Earl of Orkney to Duke of Hamilton, [London] 29 December 1703.

¹³⁰ NAS GD45/14/245/3 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 20 February 1703.

¹³¹ NAS GD45/14/245/3 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 20 February 1703.

of 1705. In writing to Lady Panmure concerning the raising of local regiments in Perth and Angus, Lady Nairne was reminded of, ‘a dispute we had at Dunkeld about non jurors in this shire’, and continued to discuss the loyalty of local men.¹³² Once more her letters implied that she was not hesitant in voicing her opinion and these issues dominated her letters.

In 1708 a letter described her journey south to London to seek an audience with Queen Anne in order to secure her husband’s release from imprisonment. A conversation with a fellow Scot allowed her once more the opportunity to write at length on religious issues, the reign of Queen Anne and overseas news.¹³³ She admitted that, owing to her situation, few people would see her but she took the opportunity during her audience with Queen Anne to, ‘discourse of my lord in particular’, and then, ‘of all my country men in general’.¹³⁴ Lord Nairne’s position was precarious and his wife succeeded as she, ‘got my Lord kept from being put in the Tower’.¹³⁵ It is easy to see why these actions and Lady Nairne’s own words can work in favour of reaching a firm pronouncement on her personal values and loyalty to Jacobitism.

What her letters to Lady Panmure show is a forceful character, affectionate and loyal to friends but not averse to family disputes while fully aware of the differing principles evident in noble families. Lady Nairne may well have had profound Jacobite beliefs and fully supported any of those who shared these views, especially her husband. What her letters illustrate is a noblewoman with the literary ability to express her views forcefully but also with some discretion. Lady Nairne exemplifies an

¹³² NAS GD45/14/245/8 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 18 January 1705.

¹³³ NAS GD45/14/245/11 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [York] 10 May 1708.

¹³⁴ NAS GD45/14/245/12 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [London] 16 May 1708.

¹³⁵ NAS GD45/14/245/12 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [London] 16 May 1708

accomplished letter writer. She had mastered the art of camouflaging complaints or criticism as well as making astute judgments by writing well, displaying manners, humour and enough deference to cause little offence. She did more than report events, she literally told a story in relaying her audience with the Queen and her encounters while travelling. She mixed her keen interest in politics, religion and business artlessly with family news, gossip and current affairs. She demonstrates someone who developed an epistolary strategy to cope with her situation.

Knowing about Lady Nairne's involvement in the 1715 rebellion and her later Jacobite support should not unduly influence how to read Lady Nairne's earlier letters. Seeing her actions through the lens of Jacobitism rather negates the varied and complex role she managed within a wider family network over a long period of time. Defining her as Jacobite suggests that she had only one route to take. The opposite was true and fully examining Lady Nairne's letters from the union period provides evidence of her opinions, her keen interest in political and economic issues, her religious awareness and her practical abilities. She was operating in much the same way as many other noblewomen and developed these skills and abilities over time. A decision on her personal, active, commitment to Jacobitism would have been determined over time and influenced by many factors. Analysis of Lady Nairne's epistolary network and her literary style suggests she steered a diverse course through family relationships, carefully negotiating family interest, politics and religion over many years and reveal her to be more than just a Jacobite.

Conclusion

The letters of Scottish noblewomen are hugely informative sources which demand thorough analysis to glean the fullest amount of detail they contain. The significance of

noblewomen's letters in enriching and augmenting knowledge of the period 1688-1707 is not only found in the alternative female view they provide of contemporary events. Letters which have been catalogued as 'not important' because they only appear to contain family news, health issues or gossip are actually as essential to our understanding of noblewomen as the more overtly political letters which will be examined in a subsequent chapter.

The ways in which noblewomen understood and engaged with religious, political or social issues cannot be wholly determined by treatise or parliamentary speeches or state papers that were written by men. If noblewomen were essentially excluded from such male dominated areas we might expect their writing to reflect this exclusion. It does not. However, using the same standards which are applied to men's letters, formal correspondences and state papers is problematic. Noblewomen's literary efforts and engagement with contemporary issues was different from men's. It was rare for noblewomen to reveal personal views, opinions or direct comments on people and events in the same manner. This is one reason why female sources have either been underutilised or findings have been skewed by relating them to male standards.¹³⁶

Understanding how noblewomen engaged with epistolary conventions demonstrates that they certainly used letter writing to express themselves, support their families and engage with the important issues that dominated their lives. Noblewomen also maintained an important role in reporting and disseminating news or in managing family conflict or in debating current affairs. Letters were crucial to securing favours, gaining support and dealing with management and business. Noblewomen had to do

¹³⁶ Although credit is due for his efforts to include women, the conclusions that Karl von den Steinen reached on his examination of Hamilton and Atholl women's letters support my point as he failed to define female political involvement and viewed the experiences of three noblewomen only in relation to their husbands, see von den Steinen, 'Women's Political Activism' in Ewan and Meikle, *Women in Scotland*, pp.112-122. Elaine Chalus concludes that elite women have been referred to within political histories but an emphasis on separate spheres and a focus on political men means historian's, 'interests have been elsewhere', and not on noblewomen, Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 4-5.

this while remaining within patriarchal constraints and they did so in a distinctly female literary way. Acknowledging these distinctions is hugely significant in pursuing the broadest inclusion of noblewomen within political history.

Their letters reveal a reliance on family and kin networks. They reveal noblewomen manoeuvring between difficult choices, principled but willing to compromise to promote or protect family interest. Conversely, their standards of writing could suggest a lack of literary skills. The fact that no political essays by Scots noblewomen survives for this period could also indicate the limitations of education and experience. What noblewomen failed to include in their letters, particularly in respect to connections with London and the Court, could also signify an insular attitude. These assertions could lead to a judgment of Scots noblewomen as inward looking or narrow and uneducated.

However, rather than limiting noblewomen these experiences actually indicate their capabilities and resourcefulness. Their priorities were managing the household and estate, supporting their menfolk and actively providing and disseminating information. Many fulfilled these roles in spite of apparent disadvantages. Lesser literary abilities did not hinder noblewomen from pursuing favour, making reports or from becoming managers. Their letters remind us that noblewomen were a product of their own unique experiences and, however different or similar to men, they expressed their views in their own individual ways. Noblewomen's surviving sources must be approached with this diversity in mind. Only then can a fuller picture emerge of what noble families, as a whole, understood to be happening in Scotland, both politically and economically.

Chapter 3

Religion

The survival of autobiographical religious writing for Scottish noblewomen in the period 1688 to 1710 is extremely rare.¹ Writing that has survived offers a valuable insight into the spiritual lives of female authors and the religious diary of Katherine, first Duchess of Atholl, provides a remarkable example of this kind of writing. Lady Katherine's religious writings illustrate her piety, the devotional practises of a woman of her status and reflect her religious concerns. Her journal has the added advantage of being examined alongside her surviving correspondence and so provides a distinctive contribution. This chapter will explore the religiosity of noblewomen through analysis of Lady Katherine's writing. The relevant religious and family issues which affected her may illuminate what concerned other noblewomen. How noblewomen embraced and preserved their own personal faith, how they provided for the spiritual needs of the household and broader community highlights noblewomen's roles and responsibilities at this time. Comparing Lady Katherine's religiosity to other noblewomen provides some idea of the impact and influence faith had on their lives and relationships.

Comparisons with the religious writings of men and non-noble women give some idea

¹ Mullan, *Life Writing*, pp. 1-22. Mullan has published the, 'Presbyterian evangelical self writings', of eight women in the period 1670-1730 and concludes that of fifty similar surviving pieces that have been found only sixteen were written by women. The others were not included in his volume as they have already been published and of this collection only two were written by women of noble status, one being Katherine, Duchess of Atholl.

of how usual or unusual her attitude and writing was. A central theme in her journal was the behaviour of her husband and she conveys an underlying sense that his family's adherence to Episcopalianism placed pressure on the couple. Differences in strength of faith could create tensions within families and exploring how women negotiated these problems reveals that some noblewomen embraced a more spiritual life than others. In doing so they harnessed the power of female religiosity and could use it as a source of persuasion within the family and within marriages. This chapter will demonstrate the way noblewomen might use religion to assert their authority and influence others.

The Religious Background

It is difficult to fully comprehend the expressions of faith and levels of belief and devotional practises in the Revolution to Union era. It was a time of, 'renewed religious and moral fervour', in Scotland and the Church, or Kirk, had a significant impact on society with a 'pious and enthusiastic' form of Protestantism taking root.² The belief in omens and portents, the fear of witchcraft, the idea that sin would be punished by an enraged God was not only a personal experience; God's wrath could turn on an entire nation. The strict discipline of the Kirk introduced a level of self governing and moral vigilance over Scots although the Highlands remained less easy to control and Catholicism persisted in some places.³ The establishment of Scots Presbyterianism stemmed from the 1690 revolution settlement and William II saw the practical sense in maintaining the Episcopalian settlement in Scotland in line with the Anglican settlement in England. Some Scottish bishops failed to acknowledge William and Mary

² T.C. Smout, *A History of the Scottish People, 1560-1830* (London, 1998), pp. 72-100.

³ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 37-39; Smout, *History of the Scottish People*, pp. 94-96.

and remained loyal to the exiled monarch James VI as they were unable, along with English non-jurors, to modify their beliefs to support the Revolution.⁴ The Jacobitism of some Episcopal clergy meant they were, ‘tainted with disloyalty and distrusted’, while Presbyterians promoted themselves as supporters of the revolution. William made efforts to comprehend loyal Williamite Episcopalians within the structures of the Kirk between 1692 and 1695 but even in the subsequent reign of Queen Anne further efforts at Scots Episcopalian toleration were resisted.⁵

On April twenty-fifth 1690 the Act of Supremacy of 1669, which had allowed the monarch supreme authority over the church, was rescinded and an act was passed the same day which allowed those Presbyterian ministers who had been ejected from their parishes since 1661 to be reinstated. In June 1690 the Westminster Confession of Faith was ratified and Presbyterian Church government was established once more with previous legislation pertaining to prelacy rescinded or annulled.⁶ Patronage was abolished in July 1690 and heritors and elders were allowed to nominate ministers to parishes. Congregations had the right to approve or disapprove the nominee with presbytery having the ultimate decision over any issues.⁷ The Solemn League and Covenant of 1643 was not renewed which led to divisions between Presbyterians as staunch believers refused to recognise the church settlement. The United Societies, or Cameronians, were more extreme Presbyterians who rejected the settlement as a ‘sinful compromise’ and so rejected the monarch as they believed in a covenanted nation under a covenanted king.⁸ The revolution settlement was at the heart of extensive and protracted divisions between Presbyterians and Episcopalians in the Revolution to

⁴ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 37-39; Smout, *History of the Scottish People*, pp. 94-96.

⁵ C. Kidd, ‘Constructing a civil religion: Scots Presbyterians and the Eighteenth Century British State’, in J. Kirk (ed.), *The Scottish Churches and the Union Parliament 1706-1999* (Scottish Church History Society, 2001), pp. 3-5.

⁶ Stephen, *Scottish Presbyterians*, pp. 2-3; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 78.

⁷ Stephen, *Scottish Presbyterians*, p. 4.

⁸ Stephen, *Scottish Presbyterians*, pp. 5-6.

Union era. This chapter will explore how noblewomen understood these divisions, how they reacted to them and how this impacted on Scots noble families.

Women and Religion.

Women had important responsibilities for the spiritual welfare of those within the noble household and estate.⁹ Their authority in this role suggests that noblewomen could achieve a level of autonomy in religious affairs without having a formally recognised function within the Church. Protestantism afforded them the ability to embrace a, ‘direct, unmediated relationship with God’, and educated women could study the Bible for themselves and so instruct others in their care.¹⁰ The sermon and the preached word became the centre of Presbyterian faith and introduced a new focus on how people worshipped. Those who read scripture, meditated on the bible and set aside Sundays for worship were deemed to be godly.¹¹ This method of worship stressed the importance of education and led to an increased number of schools within parishes in Scotland.¹² Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, supported the parishes within her estates and also provided schools alongside churches so that people’s, ‘sad ignorance may be changed to knowledge and turning to God’.¹³ Duchess Anne’s wealth most likely set her apart in what she was able to provide but evidence of noblewomen supporting their local communities in this way indicates a distinctly female duty.¹⁴

⁹ Brown, *Noble Society*, pp. 233-235.

¹⁰ C. Blaisdell, ‘Calvin’s letters to Women: The Courting of Ladies in High Places’, *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (Autumn, 1982), pp. 67-84; Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, pp. 124-126 and Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her*, pp. 359-399.

¹¹ M. Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland* (London, 2002), pp. 24-25.

¹² Smout, *History of the Scottish People*, p. 88.

¹³ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p. 226.

¹⁴ Brown, *Noble Society*, pp. 233-235; Leneman, *Atholl*, pp. 109-111.

Religious and political values were intrinsically related in this period and marriages in the Hamilton family illustrate the complexity of balancing religious preferences and maintaining loyalty to the crown.¹⁵ Duchess Anne inherited her title in her own right at the age of nineteen. Her mother had died and as a child she was brought to Scotland to live with her paternal grandmother Lady Anna Cunningham (1593-1647), a formidable Presbyterian.¹⁶ Duchess Anne was instructed in her father's last letter to her, and in her uncle's will, to marry a Protestant.¹⁷ She actually married a Roman Catholic who converted in order to meet the conditions of the marriage.¹⁸ His ability to change faith could be interpreted as abandoning personal beliefs for the material gains of marrying one of the richest women in Scotland. However, Duchess Anne would have considered his actions to be proof of his true faith emerging and so his conversion would have been understood as a religious achievement.

Similarly, the marriages of the Hamilton daughters were not without religious complexities. Lady Katherine married Lord John Murray, later first duke of Atholl, in 1683. Atholl's adherence to Presbyterianism within an Episcopalian family meant that he came under intense social and political pressure at times in his life but he was supported in his faith by his wife.¹⁹ Religion was central to her life although, by her own admission, family and politics appear to have diverted her attention from the truly spiritual existence she desired. The strength of her piety and her devotion to God was a

¹⁵ Bruce Lenman highlights the need to recognise both religious preference and noble factions and family concerns when gauging the reaction of the nobility to regime change, see B. Lenman, 'The Scottish Nobility and the Revolution of 1688-1689', in R. Beddard (ed.), *The Revolutions of 1688* (New York, 1991), pp. 137-162.

¹⁶ Lady Anna was a daughter of the earl of Glencairn and shared that family's covenanting values and it was alleged she supported the Covenanters personally during the religious troubles of the 1630s, see Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 24-25.

¹⁷ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 28-29.

¹⁸ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p. 29.

¹⁹ The edited family history makes no mention of a conversion from Episcopalianism but does acknowledge that Lord Murray took part in the expedition of the 'Highland Host' with his father the Marquis to suppress radical Presbyterians in 1678. In 1682 marriage was proposed between Lord Murray and Lady Katherine so by this time it would be fair to assume he had converted to Presbyterianism, see Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, pp. 171-181; Paul, *Scots Peerage*, I, pp. 478-480; Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p. 147.

fundamental part of her marriage to Atholl. Her own written account illustrates the role religion played within her marriage and how this impacted on her relationships with other family members.

Lady Margaret Hamilton was another daughter who shared her mother and sister's Presbyterianism and she married James, fourth earl of Panmure (1658-1723), a Protestant who was also a supporter of the Stuart dynasty. In a period where the terms Episcopalian and Jacobitism were practically synonymous it is important not to assume this was always the case.²⁰ When William and Mary came to the throne Panmure would not take the oaths of allegiance and remained a committed Jacobite who participated in the rebellion of 1715 and lived in exile thereafter.²¹ Faith did not prevent Lady Panmure from developing relationships with fellow Jacobites in particular Lady Nairne, an Episcopalian within the Murray of Atholl family. Their correspondence sheds light her personal approach to religion on how Lady Katherine's more determined piety was perceived within the family.

Another Hamilton daughter, Lady Susan, married into the Cochrane family, earls of Dundonald. Her husband, the second earl, was noted for having attended the negotiations offering William of Orange the crown but ill health prevented him from attending parliament and he died in 1690.²² Lady Dundonald spent the next seven years as a widow and she appears to have had no religious differences with her husband's family, as all the issues she referred to in relation to protecting the welfare of

²⁰ Devout Scots lived in exile in the Netherlands after having suffered persecution and imprisonment for their religious and political beliefs, many harbouring a hatred of the Stuarts. Other less devoted Protestants had made their protest at James II's Catholicism without taking up arms or following the Prince of Orange, see Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 78-79.

²¹ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, pp. 394-395; D. Szechi, *1715, The Great Jacobite Rebellion* (London, 2006).

²² The peerage is selective in mentioning the religious preferences of men and tends to do so only if there was any religious strife or particular piety, women tend to be mentioned in terms of religion if they were extremely pious, see Paul, *Scots Peerage*, III, pp. 352-354.

her sons relate to health, money and property.²³ Had religion been an issue it would surely have featured in her letters requesting support in their upbringing. Religion does not appear to be of consequence to her second marriage to Charles Hay, Master of Yester as letters among the family regarding this were mostly concerned with the financial arrangements of the match.²⁴ However, in one letter to her sister dated 1699 she commented that the Darien venture was, ‘making a great noise in England’, and that an address concerning this had gone well in Perthshire and ministers in Glasgow were ‘preaching very fast’ on the matter, concluding, ‘the godly Kirk has acted their part well at this time.’²⁵ Overall Lady Dundonald’s surviving letters rarely mention God and did not hint at any particularly pious behaviour but her letter suggests that even less devout noblewomen expected the Kirk to have a role and she recognised the power of sermons to disseminate news.

The experience of noblewomen within the Hamilton and Murray family demonstrates how religious diversity was, at that time, no barrier to relationships and that differences could, quite easily, be overcome. Contrasting beliefs and arguments over doctrine caused division in other areas of society so how did noble families steer their way through these conflicts? More important to this study is how noblewomen involved themselves in resolving, managing or exploiting these issues. The Hamilton women show differing levels of piety but overall they adhered to their faith while the

²³ NAS GD406/1/9101 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran, [Edinburgh] 7 March 1694; NAS GD406/1/9099 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran, [?] 3 June 1694; NAS GD406/1/7364 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran, [Edinburgh] 27 October 1694; NAS GD406/1/7365 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran, [Edinburgh] 8 November 1694.

²⁴ NAS GD406/1/6422 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran, [Holyroodhouse] 18 March 1697; NAS GD406/1/7564 Basil, Lord Hamilton, to Earl of Arran, [Holyroodhouse] 18 March 1697; NAS GD406/1/7567 Basil, Lord Hamilton, to Earl of Arran, [Holyroodhouse] 27 March 1697; NAS GD406/1/6424, Susan Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran, [Holyroodhouse] 10 April 1697; Blair MS 29.I.(9).356 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Hamilton] 18 October 1697; Blair MS 29.I.(9).415 Earl of Ruglen to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Minthouse] 11 November 1697.

²⁵ Blair MS 45.(I).60 Susan, Lady Yester, to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Edinburgh] 18 December 1699.

men around them appear to be more flexible over the conflicting pressures of loyalty and religion. Noblewomen could assume this flexibility too and matters of faith might not have troubled them unduly. The point is that some noblewomen did demonstrate a strong faith and were commended for such godly and righteous qualities.²⁶ This chapter seeks to explore why some noblewomen were more religiously committed than others and developed a religious persona that was recognised by others. In supporting local ministers and churches and providing education women were perceived within the wider community as having this important, religious, position. Were those noblewomen who chose a less devout attitude missing an opportunity to acquire independence and exert influence for themselves in a way society deemed acceptable? Or did those without a firm religiosity find another route to exercise power? The diary of Lady Katherine and letters from other noblewomen provides a case study which will attempt to answer these questions and reveal how family relationships coped with religious differences.

The Diary

The religious writing of Lady Katherine is entitled, '*Memoirs of her grace, Katherine, duchess of Atholl, in form of a diary*', but it is a copy taken from the original documents by her husband.²⁷ The collection consists of two small note books covering the years 1686, 1687, 1688 and 1690 which all contain notes on various religious quotes, readings and psalms. Also included are Lady Katherine's 'contemplations' on

²⁶ Some family histories have paid particular attention to remembering wives as virtuous and devoted, for example see Wilson, *Airlie, Vol. II*, pp. 86 and 93-94; Baillie, *Metrical Legends*. Barbara Mursion explores this further, see Mursion, 'Lapidary Inscriptions', pp. 99-112.

²⁷ Blair Castle Archive MS Box 29.II.1-5, Bundles, 1625, 1627, 1629 and 1631; Mullan, *Life Writings* pp. 358-383. Mullan gives a full transcription of the self writings of Lady Katherine and useful family introduction and history of the documents. A version was published in *The Christian Journal* (Edinburgh, 1813) and another more legible copy was made in 1873 but is not complete.

the death of her infant daughter Anne in 1686, a notebook containing daily instructions for living and her, 'meditations concerning the Union', dated 1706.²⁸ (see Appendix 4) Atholl noted that his wife left all her writings to him just before her death, with the instructions that he, 'was to make good use of them.'²⁹ This suggests it was her intention that he should have them and that there was some instructive merit in the material. Knowing how Atholl came to have the writings and that it came in various forms, both books and manuscripts, the copy he made has been named a diary by Atholl himself. The idea that it gives a record of personal events is true in the sense that it gives a record of certain religiously defined events which affected Lady Katherine. It in no way records her day to day life and in some cases makes only the briefest reference to family news or political issues. Events which prompted her to write can be traced through the edited family history and correspondence.

Four preliminary pieces are included before the actual diary begins in October of 1688 and it is unclear if they were part of the original book. A short paragraph on prayer is followed by nine instructions on duties recommended in a sermon by Mr Mitchell, both undated. The next paragraph notes the dates of eighteenth and twenty-fourth of November 1681 as the point in time where she dedicated her life to God. The fourth entry has been added from another source and is entitled, 'My wife's meditations on the death of our eldest daughter Anne, Falkland July 1686'.³⁰ After this text the diary itself commences.

Lady Katherine made thirty-three entries in total but one entry was dated three times so overall there are thirty-five specified dates. Of thirty-two days noted, eighteen entries were written on Sundays, five on Wednesdays and three each for Mondays,

²⁸ Blair MS 29.II.1-5.

²⁹ Mullan, *Life Writing*, p. 361.

³⁰ Blair MS 29.II.1- 4.

Thursdays and Saturdays.³¹ It reflects Lady Katherine's religious practise that she frequently wrote on a Sunday in response to that day's sermon and the time she gave to contemplation. The years are quite erratic with one entry for 1688, three for 1689, one for 1690 and two for 1691. Three follow in 1692 and only one for 1694 but five are given in 1697 and the most, ten entries, were written in 1698. In 1699 two entries were made, one for 1701 and two entries for both 1705 and 1706 and then the diary ends.

Lady Katherine noted where she was at the time of writing and from the diary it is possible to note family residences and some of her travelling. The first entry was written at Dunkeld near the Atholl family estate but the years 1689 through to 1694 were written at Falkland in Fife and Huntingtower, near Perth, also family properties. By September 1697 she was at Holyroodhouse and as her husband had been created earl of Tullibardine and was appointed a secretary of state this move reflects his position and their change of circumstances.³² In the following year, 1698, seven of the ten entries were written in Kensington as Tullibardine divided his time between London and Edinburgh so Lady Katherine certainly joined him. All entries after 1698 are given as Huntingtower and Dunkeld and it would have been possible for her to have travelled in this time but it is not noted in the diary.

Visiting family homes and being in Edinburgh or London meant long absences from home and being parted from her family prompted Lady Katherine to contemplate their lives. She wrote that she hoped her eldest son might, 'be a blising to the land he has an interest in', and she celebrated his elevated position by writing that, 'as God had distinguished him in a high birth in this world', so might he also distinguish him as

³¹ Consultation of the Julian calendar has allowed any dates without days to be identified but three had no dates, only the month and year, so no day could be ascribed.

³² Paul, *Scots Peerage*, I, pp. 478-480; J. R. Young, 'Murray, John, first duke of Atholl (1660-1724)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) online ed.
<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19627>

‘highly holy’.³³ Understanding noble birth as a blessing which required noblemen to behave in a suitably responsible manner was a guiding principle for a mother and wife. Lady Katherine and her husband wrote to their son to impress upon him what was expected of him and this was something many parents did although instructions reveal varying degrees of religiosity.³⁴ The Marquis of Atholl wrote to his son as ‘dear Jacke’ when he was a young unmarried man and reminded him to, ‘remember your Creatour in the days of your youth, and it will be easie to you when you grow old...’³⁵

Letters which dealt with any traumatic or sad news would reflect a heightened sense of religiosity in keeping with the seriousness of events. Similarly good news on births and marriages carried blessings and praise for God.³⁶ Many of these letters and messages were following the religious standards of the period but these letters were not just formulaic. The importance of religion in peoples’ lives meant they truly believed the religious sentiment they conveyed even if that sentiment was not included in every letter they wrote. Letters reflect the importance of religion but not every person was devout.

³³ Blair MS Bundle 1631.

³⁴ Blair MS 29.I.(9).8 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine reporting the children’s religious education, [Holyroodhouse] 9 January 1697. Mary Countess of Mar wrote to her son on his appointment as Justice Clerk reminding that he, ‘walks in God’s glory’, see NAS GD124/15/995 Mary, Countess of Mar to Lord Grange, [Stirling Castle] 17 August 1710. Anna, Countess of Seafield was instructed by her mother in a particularly religious tone, see NAS GD 248/560/40/3 Janet Craik to Anna Countess of Seafield, [Kinkorth?] 9 August 1706. Anna then wrote to her son with religious sentiment but less piety, NAS GD248/560/40/25 Anna, Countess of Seafield to Lord Deskford, [Edinburgh] 18 August 1707.

³⁵ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 170.

³⁶ Blair MS 45.(1).148 Amelia, Marchioness of Atholl to Earl of Atholl on the death of her son Mungo, [Blair] 21 July 1699; Blair MS 45.(1).198 Margaret, Countess of Panmure to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, on the death of their brother’s children, [?] 5 May 1701; NAS GD3/5/859 unsigned letter to Anne, Countess of Eglinton giving an account of her mother’s death, [?] 15 July 1707; NAS GD124/15/519 letters from George Hay Master of Dupplin to Earl of Mar on the death of Mar’s wife and Hay’s sister, Margaret Countess of Mar, [Dupplin] 13 April- 17 May 1707 and similar from Mar’s mother to her son, NAS GD124/15/552 Mary, Dowager Countess of Mar to Earl of Mar, 21 April 8 July 1707. On the state of the country Lord Basil Hamilton wrote to his sister saying, ‘the condition of the country looks judgment like’, and hoped, ‘pray God arest his wrath’, Blair MS 29.I.(8).227 Lord Basil Hamilton to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Hamilton] 6 June 1696.

Letters which were particularly devotional allow us to discern between the more standard references to God and truly pious correspondents. The mother of Anne, Lady Seafield (d. 1708) sent her daughter letters which were very religious in content and tone with the subject of health resulting in pages of devotional language and instructions but little actual news.³⁷ Lady Seafield herself wrote to her son Lord Deskford in 1707 instructing him regarding his marriage negotiations. She hoped that, ‘God may direct you and your father in it’, and to, ‘marry in a family of quality’, adding that, ‘I do not mind by quality only the nobility’, but that a suitable bride had to be, ‘soberly and religiously educated’.³⁸ Although giving advice on religion the tone of her letter was not as devout as her mother’s but the high regard for firm religious principles is clear. Similarly Christian Leslie, Marchioness of Montrose (d. 1710) wrote to her son giving her opinion that travel was corrupting his religious and political views.³⁹ She reproached him in a long letter with a religious tone but overall her writing was not as pious as others. In contrast many correspondences contain almost no piety with the only reference to God being in the usual wishes for good health.⁴⁰ Lady Katherine’s writing was certainly more religious in style and content than many of the other noblewomen she corresponded with. She could be particularly devout when writing to

³⁷ NAS GD248/560/40/3 Janet Craik to Anna, Lady Seafield, [Kinkorth?] 9 August 1706. A letter from an uncle to Lady Seafield’s mother-in-law Anne, Lady Findlater also has a religious tone see NAS GD248/556/10/Montgomery to Anne, Lady Findlater, [?] [n.d.] June 1683. Also with a notably religious tone NAS GD40/2/7/63 Lady Lothian to the Marchioness of Douglas, [Newbattle] 15 May 1694.

³⁸ NAS GD248/560/40/41 Anna, Lady Seafield to James Lord Deskford, [Cullen] 5 December 1707.

³⁹ NAS GD220/5/7 Christian, Marchioness of Montrose to Duke of Montrose, [Kinross] 23 November 1699. The Marchioness wrote similarly in 1704, see NAS GD220/5/78/2 Christian, Marchioness of Montrose to Duke of Montrose, [Kinross] 27 June 1704.

⁴⁰ Religion is hardly a feature in some series of sources although small references can be found, see NAS GD40/9/114 Five letters from Lady Newbattle and Lady Jedburgh to Countess of Lothian, [?] [N.d.] 1698; NAS GD406/1/6888 Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton to Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 24 January, 1704; NAS GD406/1/6889 Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton to Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 30 January, 1704; NAS GD406/1/6890 Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton to Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 1 February, 1704; NAS GD406/1/6891 Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton to Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 2 February, 1704; NAS GD406/1/6892 Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton to Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 3 February, 1704; NAS GD124/15/231 Letters to Margaret, Countess of Mar, from Earl of Mar, 1704-1705; NAS GD220/5/224 Letters from Christian Carnegie, Duchess of Montrose to Duke of Montrose, [Edinburgh] 3 January- 25 March, 1709; NAS GD406/1/11171a Anne, Lady Blantyre to her son, Lord Blantyre, [Edinburgh] 21 April, 1709.

her husband although his letters do not quite match her intensity. For example a long letter to Atholl covering various family problems included her suggestion that in facing their troubles they should:

looke to the hand of God & not man in it, for however it
may be unjust from man yet its just with God to afflict us,
for we have not lived to him nor rendered thanks for his
mercies as we ought nor as we have promised...⁴¹

Lady Katherine continued by suggesting scripture to him as she had been reading, ‘part of the 37ps: to day which I think very good & proper for us’, and she asked him to, ‘red it & consider it seriously & throu gods blising it will quiete you much.’⁴² Although they discussed the Bible she also wrote of duty, honour and the role of God in carrying out their joint responsibilities.⁴³ A letter written in 1692 gives an indication of how she used her religiosity as one of the ways she could impress her will upon her husband.⁴⁴ Lady Katherine wrote this letter after a disagreement over doctrine and initially she showed her remorse and worry, writing:

...suppose you shoud goe from me a while because I have don
something that displeased you, shoud not this grive me when I
find you have withdrawn from me, & the more that I know it is
throu my own falt, yet all this while I know & dose not dought but
that you are still my husband, just so it is betwin God & the

⁴¹ Blair MS 45.(1).19 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 21 June 1699.

⁴² Blair MS 45.(1).19 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 21 June 1699.

⁴³ Some letters were more devotional than others but rarely did Lady Katherine fail to mention God, particularly devout letters include Blair MS 45.(1).124 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 29 May 1700; Blair MS 45.(2).82 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 28 March 1702. How others addressed her also suggests her religiosity and even her factor wrote with particular religious sentiment clearly aware of her spiritual nature when dealing with her, see Blair MS 29.I.(8).17 James Murray, Factor to Katherine, Lady Murray, [Tullibardine] 13 January 1696.

⁴⁴ Blair MS 29.I.(6).66 Katherine, Lady Murray, to Lord Murray, [?] 11 January 1692. Similarly Blair MS 45.(1).21 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 23 June 1699. The Marchioness of Atholl would also use a religious form of persuasion, Blair MS 45.(1).32 Amelia, Marchioness of Atholl to Earl of Tullibardine, [Blair] 7 August 1699.

beliver, for when he hides his face then the soule is trubled...⁴⁵

Although she appears to be blaming herself for having displeased her husband she stressed the significance of marriage and how important Atholl was to her. She skilfully placed emphasis on Atholl's relationship with God to help him realize, as she declared, that without God there is only a 'trubled soule'. She then continued:

...after what I have writ I know not whither to shew you this or not,
but my heart was so full that I could not hold from disburdening it
on this pece of paper, wch gives me some litle ease for the present,
but it is only a through chaing in you that can give me absolut ease in
this poynt, who I pray God of his infiniet mercy & free grace to grant⁴⁶

Although she confessed to having doubts about showing her husband her true feelings, her actions, in both writing these thoughts and then sending them to him, actually prove the opposite. Her final line is a direct challenge to him to change in order to ease her mind. Her words show her deference by suggesting that everything was in his power to resolve but actually she was defiant in her religious stance which was strong. Who could argue with a wife who displayed such piety? Although she assumed blame and confirmed her love she was still forcing her husband to ask himself if he was doing the same.

Lady Katherine's religious practises were detailed in two books covering the years 1686 to 1690. These contain religious quotes, references to scripture, readings and psalms and refer to bible passages she considered and drew comfort from.⁴⁷ Another book outlined fourteen headings which detail up to five instructions each on how to live her life in accordance with God's wishes.⁴⁸ Lady Katherine noted instructions

⁴⁵ Blair MS 29.I.(6).66 Katherine, Lady Murray to Lord Murray, [?] 11 January 1692.

⁴⁶ Blair MS 29.I.(6).66 Katherine, Lady Murray to Lord Murray, [?] 11 January 1692.

⁴⁷ Blair MS 29.II.1.

⁴⁸ Blair MS 29.II.3.

under various headings including her duties, her heart, her temptations, her tongue and talents. Under the heading 'Concerning my Duties' she wrote, 'Bid not God find me on my bed when he expected me on my knees', and instructions included, 'Have I faithfully discharged and don nothing against my duties to my relations, have I behaved my selfe as a Christian and as a wife, parent, child and mistress'.⁴⁹ As a noblewoman she was aware of 'her works' and questioned her own idleness and whether she had 'over eagerly minded' earthly affairs over spiritual ones. Under the heading, 'the use of my liberty', she questioned whether she had led a, 'diligent, watchfull, selfe denying life'. These illustrate her interpretation of the principals which governed her Presbyterian faith and she finished with the question, 'in sum what have I don for God or my soule this day'.⁵⁰ These emphasise the importance she placed on living her private life, as well as the public role she had as a noblewoman in charge of a household and estate, in the manner her religion advocated. Of course the argument remains that just because there is written evidence of how she intended to live her life this is not proof that she succeeded in her aim. In reality she may have found these commands hard to achieve but her intentions have been preserved if not faithfully adhered to.

Similar religious instructions and lists of directives can be found in the writing of other women. Shared Christian experiences include a youthful awakening or conversion to religion, a personal covenant with God which could be renewed over time, as well as devoting children to Christ. Lady Katherine's writing has similarities to other women's writing from the same period or earlier, much of which focuses on ministers, Bible interpretation and a seemingly continual quest to live a pure and

⁴⁹ Blair MS 29.II.3.

⁵⁰ Blair MS 29.II.3.

devoted life.⁵¹ Being aware of all she wrote in a religious sense gives an overall impression of the level of piety and devotion she expressed over time. She was not unlike other women in this respect but her status may have helped her to develop her religious influence given that her life was bound to a man involved in government and political affairs. The writing of non-noble women such as Katharine and Jean Collace reveal aspects of their lives and work which was important to them, for example their domestic service, marriages and childbearing and so reveal the areas in which they had some independence as they attempted to live a Godly life.⁵² Lady Katherine's writing reveals religion was an essential aspect of her life and provides clues as to how she regarded her own responsibilities and roles. For her, extreme piety was something which provided her with a clear strength of purpose and as such it was the source of her influence.

Ministers.

An important issue for a staunch Presbyterian such as Lady Katherine was her interest and patronage of the ministers who served in the local parishes. It is not clear that she had a private chaplain but she referred to ministers in her writings including Mr Mitchell, Mr William Chalmers and Mr John Forrest. In May 1691 she admitted in her diary, 'what a burthen it was to me, the fears I was in that my husband should have obstructed a good ministry's being settled in this place [Falkland]'. This entry reflected her fear that Atholl may have prevented a Presbyterian minister from being allowed to

⁵¹ Katharine Collace (1635-1697), her sister Jean Collace (died after 1704) and Henrietta Lindsay, Lady Campbell (1657-1712) all write with a very similar style and manner, being devout and with an incredible knowledge of scripture. They have different backgrounds and include spiritual awakenings and personal covenants. Only Lady Campbell shares Lady Katherine's noble status but their writing has much in common, suggesting that Lady Katherine's religiosity was not unique, see Mullan, *Life Writing*, pp. 39-212.

⁵² Mullan, *Life Writings*, pp. 39-212.

replace an Episcopalian in their local parish although she later reported that the Presbyterian John Forrest had been appointed.⁵³ How the matter was resolved is not clear but Lady Katherine's relief was evident.

The Atholl family, 'threw their weight on the side of episcopacy', after 1690 and attempted to have their local Episcopalian ministers maintained in their posts as long as they complied with the law.⁵⁴ Atholl's mother, the Marchioness, wrote to her son in Edinburgh in 1693 to ensure he made it known to the Privy Council that all Episcopalian ministers in the Atholl northern lands had agreed to pray for William and Mary.⁵⁵ In Tibbermore, the parish of the Atholl's lowland seat Huntingtower, the Episcopal minister Alexander Balneaves only remained for two years after being summoned before the presbytery in 1690 and was then deposed for minor offences. In Little Dunkeld, near Blair Atholl, the Episcopal minister Alexander McLagan renounced episcopacy in 1693 and continued as parish minister.⁵⁶ John Forrest was the first Presbyterian minister to be placed in the parish at Falkland. Although Lady Katherine alluded to Atholl initially obstructing this appointment she was obviously pleased at the outcome. However, letters from Forrest to Atholl detail his misery at being in a parish where the parishioners did not share Lady Katherine's enthusiasm. He wrote that none of the four heritors in the parish, presumably Episcopalians, would receive him or attend services and had, 'gott up another to preach and draw the people away'.⁵⁷ Atholl's mother clearly supported toleration for Episcopalian ministers while Lady Katherine obviously favoured the placing of Presbyterians. Other noblewomen

⁵³ Blair MS Bundle 1631. Mullan refers to John Forrest as the minister who was also mentioned by Lady Campbell. He had been deprived in 1662 but was fortunate not to be prosecuted for gathering conventicles during this time and moved between several parishes, Mullan, *Life Writing*, p. 212.

⁵⁴ Leneman, *Atholl*, pp. 86-91.

⁵⁵ Leneman, *Atholl*, p. 87.

⁵⁶ Leneman, *Atholl*, p. 87.

⁵⁷ Leneman, *Atholl*, pp. 87. Mullan notes that John Forrest did not remain long in Falkland, moving to Dunbar after only a year, Mullan, *Life Writing*, p. 212. The Earl of Tullibardine corresponded over another minister for this parish in 1702, Blair MS 54.(2).49 John Anderson Principle of St Andrews to Earl of Tullibardine writing on behalf of his son, [St Andrews] 25 February 1702.

felt as strongly. The Duchess of Argyll believed that it was, ‘as much a sin to separate a man from his wife as a minister from his people’, adding that as she had known, ‘the sad effects of one she will never yield to the other.’⁵⁸ The removal of Episcopalians and the appointment of Presbyterian ministers could be a contested issue within families as well as being felt within the community. Noblewomen clearly involved themselves in these matters and in this case tensions placed Atholl in a difficult situation.

Despite the, ‘strong feelings which raged on either side of the Presbyterian – Episcopalian divide’, Atholl was considered to have maintained a ‘fair and balanced’ position.⁵⁹ He wrote in May 1706 that the, ‘planting of Presbyterian ministers’, had always been allowed by him even though he thought it, ‘reasonable to preserve the Episcopal ministers who are good men in the churches they possess’.⁶⁰ This letter actually sought protection for Episcopalian ministers in the Atholl lands and the reason the duke gave was that the, ‘too forward and bigot proceedings of the Presbytery of Perth’, against Episcopal ministers obliged him to ask the Earl of Mar to, ‘lay their cause before the Queen’.⁶¹ In 1705 however, Lady Katherine had written to the Rev Thomas Black in Perth concerning a vacancy in a local parish, Moulin and expressed her views on Perth Presbytery. She was very anxious for Episcopalians not to exploit this vacancy and admitted that she wrote to him without her husband’s knowledge.⁶² She engaged in a brief correspondence and Black explained a misunderstanding over the issue. Openly acknowledging that she wrote without her husband’s consent, and

⁵⁸ NAS GD40/2/7/85 Elizabeth Duchess of Argyll to Marchioness of Lothian, [?] 20 December 1703. The minister she defended, Mr Boes, also wrote to the Marquis of Lothian protesting his ‘unfitness’ and that he could not be parted from ‘his endeared people’, see, NAS GD40/2/7/86 Mr Boes to the Marquis of Lothian, [Campbelltown] 5 January 1704. Lady Lothian also appears to have had an interest in which ministers would be placed in her parishes but the Marquis of Douglas wrote to her that he disagreed, stating, ‘its the work and not them that the concernment’, see NAS GD40/2/7/70 Marquis of Douglas to Anne, Lady Lothian, [?] 22 July 1696.

⁵⁹ Leneman, *Atholl*, pp. 87-89.

⁶⁰ NAS GD124/15/410 Duke of Atholl to Earl of Mar, [Blair] 13 May 1706.

⁶¹ NAS GD124/15/410 Duke of Atholl to Earl of Mar, [Blair] 13 May 1706

⁶² Blair MS 45.(5).91 Katherine, Duchess of Atholl to Thomas Black, [Dunkeld] 5 June 1705.

given Atholl's later opinion on Perth Presbytery, suggests her views were quite different from her husband. These letters also indicate that she had the confidence and freedom to involve herself and her husband's permission was not necessary. The perception that Atholl maintained a balanced and reasonable attitude should be considered alongside Lady Katherine's religious opinions and pressure from his Episcopalian mother. Just because Atholl had the power to make the final decision in these matters we should be careful in accepting that he reached such decisions without any influence from others. Exploring the process through the family letters reveals that his actions could easily have resulted from attempts to balance the differing perspectives of the women who surrounded him.

Lady Katherine referred to hearing a newly placed minister Mr William Chalmers preach at Dunkeld and she called him a, 'faithful godly minister settled in this place, where the very name of Presbyterian was odious.'⁶³ This comment in 1705 clearly suggests that Presbyterianism had been unwelcome within the Atholl lands. She wrote that she hoped, 'my husband may be the first soul that may reap the benefit by his ministry, who has been the instrument of bringing him here through many and great difficulties, and even being derided and flouted by his own nearest relations for it.'⁶⁴ This was an explicit reference to Atholl being at odds with his family and the tone of this entry is one of triumph at the success of her own personal spiritual campaign to see Presbyterianism flourish. She challenged her husband and his Episcopalian family in these matters as a young wife and, gaining confidence over the years, she continued until her religious objectives had been achieved. Her actions show what determined and devout noblewomen could accomplish without formal access to the Kirk or without the full backing of their husbands. His level of commitment and faith clearly did not

⁶³ Blair MS Bundle 1631.

⁶⁴ Blair MS Bundle 1631.

match hers. After her death in 1707 Atholl was unable to prevent their sons from spurning their church and joining with the Episcopalian Jacobites within the family in the rebellion of 1715.

Noblewomen providing moral and religious guidance.

The spiritual wellbeing of her husband was a recurring theme throughout Lady Katherine's writing. She referred to praying for Atholl when his behaviour caused her concern showing that she relied on her faith to deal with these issues. In one instance she was, 'in great fears of my husband's fighting with a gentleman', and when he left Falkland for Perth she retired to his room and prayed, 'till the evening that he came home again.' She hoped God would 'disappoint her fears' and was relieved when Atholl returned unscathed.⁶⁵ Lady Katherine placed great faith in the power of prayer and this example demonstrates that she endeavoured to carry out her religious directives. There is no corresponding reference to an argument in May of 1691 in the edited family history but in November of that year Atholl noted a disagreement with the Earl of Breadalbane. Referring to Breadalbane as, 'a man of litle honesty & as litle prudence', he eventually demanded, 'satisfaction for such unhandsome dealings', regarding an unspecified dispute. When Breadalbane refused Atholl went so far as to send his brother to the Earl while waiting in a nearby park.⁶⁶ Friends intervened and a duel was averted but Lady Katherine's concern, and Atholl's own admission of such conduct, highlight his temper and difficult nature. She wrote in her diary that she trusted God would not let him, 'err for want of clear understanding what is rightest in

⁶⁵ Blair MS Bundle 1631.

⁶⁶ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, pp, 332-333.

thy sight, but be thou his guide and director in all his words, ways and actions'.⁶⁷ Her personal values were clearly formed from her interpretation of scripture and the impact of Presbyterian principles on her own life and she relied on religion in her frequent attempts to cope with Atholl's behaviour.

Another entry also casts Atholl's character in an unfavourable light. In December of 1689 Lady Katherine wrote that she was in, 'great grief at seeing my husband in passion at some of the servants'.⁶⁸ She noted his remorse afterwards but instead of confronting him she wrote that she had, 'no rest nor ease till I went to prayer for him'. Prayer was comforting and brought scripture to her mind. She recounted that it, 'was immediately borne in upon me several times, I have pardoned, and I will multiply to pardon'.⁶⁹ Lady Katherine knew her bible by heart and she recalled the scripture from memory helped by contemplation and prayer. Again this illustrates that the directives she set herself were, at times, adhered to. She was compelled to find the actual quote in the Bible and noted that instead of 'multiply' the scripture actually said 'abundantly, pardon' but she had written 'multiply' in the margin.⁷⁰ This attention to detail over the correct wording of scripture reading shows both her consideration of detail and the pride she took from such precision, proving to herself that she did indeed know her Bible and that she personally understood the word of God.

Reading the word of God, meditating on scripture, taking notes from sermons and articulating Presbyterian orthodoxy were 'the status markers' of the godliest people, both men and women.⁷¹ Patriarchal constraints may have prevented Lady Katherine from directly attempting to control her husband's conduct but she reassured herself by

⁶⁷ Blair MS Bundle 1631.

⁶⁸ Blair MS Bundle 1631.

⁶⁹ Blair MS Bundle 1631.

⁷⁰ Blair MS Bundle 1631. This activity was similar in other women writers and Mullan gives an outline of particular terms taken from the Bible as well as relating the women's writing to specific scripture, see Mullan, *Life Writings*, pp. 30-34, 42, 91, 146 and 147.

⁷¹ Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, pp. 24-25.

relying on prayer and her knowledge of scripture. Atholl could not have been ignorant of his wife's daily meditations, worship and the time she spent in prayer. All of these actions, while demonstrating her piety were also reminding him of their faith albeit in a more subtle way. In carrying out her own devotions lady Katherine was, by example, reminding her husband of his. Her diary appears to have been private and Atholl claimed not to have read it until after her death. In the aftermath of bereavement he was devastated to find that he had caused his wife so much anxiety. Throughout their life together her letters indicate how much she relied on her piety to directly, and indirectly, influence him. Letters about the family or political issues would encompass everything from her anger, her compliance, her helpful assurances to her outrage and always included her opinion and advice. However, when something particularly affected her she used religion as a back up to all her other expressions of persuasion. This may have been a personal characteristic due to her particularly devoted nature but it shows her awareness that female religiosity had the potential to influence others.

Religion in the family.

As well as supporting her husband in his faith, Lady Katherine also had to balance the differing religious views which marriage into the Atholl family imposed. Tensions over the placing and supporting of local ministers was one aspect of this but incidents within the family also tested her faith and allow us to compare her piety to other noblewomen. Her sister-in-law, Lady Nairne, corresponded with Lady Katherine's

sister, Lady Panmure.⁷² Writing in 1702 Lady Nairne reported that Lady Katherine was intending to celebrate Christmas with her husband's parents and wrote:

...there is the small matter fallen out latley I wd not dram't of,
my lady Tullibardin went yester day to Dunkeld to keep
Christmas with my Lord and lady Atholl, I intend to wish her
ladyship joy of the change, and strongly to allege
(tho I fear wth too litle reason) that she is now become
a through prosolit for what can be more Episcopal
then to hear sermon & eat of a goose on Yuill Day.⁷³

Celebrating the major religious occasions of the year had at one time been forbidden under Presbyterianism and in some places religious occasions, such as Christmas, were not celebrated and not at Hamilton by Duchess Anne.⁷⁴ In 1691 Lady Katherine and her husband were at Falkland and his mother, the Marchioness wrote to her son asking them to spend Christmas at Dunkeld where the family continued to mark the occasion.⁷⁵ Lady Katherine politely refused and was mindful in observing Presbyterian customs and even disapproved, 'of travelling...on the Lord's Day [which] I am not much in love with'.⁷⁶ That she was suspected to be partaking of the celebration of Christmas in 1702 was certainly cause for comment among the family although Lady Nairne added she would not 'be over hasty' in her judgment.⁷⁷ A further letter to Lady Panmure in February 1703 showed Lady Nairn still concerned with the previous Christmas. She confirmed that Lady Katherine had been involved in the celebrations and wrote:

⁷² Margaret, Lady Nairne had married Atholl's brother Lord William Murray in 1690 and as the Nairne title fell to Lady Margaret he became Lord Nairne, see Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 329.

⁷³ NAS GD45/14/245/2, Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 22 December 1702.

⁷⁴ C. A. Whatley, 'Order and Disorder' in E. Foyster and C. A. Whatley, (eds.) *A History of Everyday Life in Scotland, 1600-1800* (Edinburgh, 2010), pp. 191-217; Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 120-121.

⁷⁵ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 120-121

⁷⁶ Atholl, *Chronicles*, II, p. 63.

⁷⁷ NAS GD45/14/245/2, Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 22 December 1702.

I've had often occasion so to see my Lady Tullibardine I'm soray
to find so much of the old woman about her still however I
told her we'll not despair of having her a thorough convert yet
for sines she eat a good dinner this Christmas I hope sh'll not
refus to hear a good sermon the next...⁷⁸

Lady Katherine had admitted to going to prayers with her husband's family but Lady Nairne found the idea that her sister-in-law might convert as an opportunity for teasing. She sounds harsh in finding, 'so much of the old woman', about her sister-in-law but other letters indicate her sense of humour and as this remark was shared with Lady Katherine's sister it may not have been deliberately unkind.⁷⁹ Lady Katherine's piety gave her a serious demeanour but these observations strengthen the idea that her faith was her defining characteristic.

The Episcopalianism of other women in the family was just as strong as Lady Katherine's Presbyterianism even though some women had a less serious spiritual demeanour. Certainly Lady Nairne does not appear overly devout. In letters discussing the arrangements of the marriage of the young Lady Lovat, their niece, Lady Nairne again finds the religious concerns humorous. Writing to Lady Katherine about when the wedding would take place she suggested that it was worth asking their sister-in-law, the Dowager Lady Lovat, to explain why the nuptials had to be postponed for four weeks.⁸⁰ The Dowager and her mother, the Marchioness, would not allow the

⁷⁸ NAS GD45/14/245/3, Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 20 February 1703.

⁷⁹ There were other instances of teasing and humour between these women as well as the closeness of promises to call daughters after their aunts, sharing family time and being there for births and illness, see Blair MS 45.(2).116 Margaret, Countess of Panmure, to Earl of Tullibardine writing to inform the Earl of the birth of a daughter as she and Lady Nairne were with Lady Katherine while he was away, [Huntingtower] 25 April 1702.

⁸⁰ Blair MS 45.(2).63 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Earl of Tullibardine, [Nairne] 3 March 1702; Blair MS 45.(2).70 Earl of Tullibardine to his sister Amelia, Dowager Lady Lovat, [?] 6 March 1702; Blair MS 45.(2).78 Margaret, lady Nairne to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine [Nairne] [n.d.] March 1702 and Blair MS 45.(2).79 Margaret Lady Nairne, to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine [Nairne] [n.d.] March 1702 are from Lady Nairne to Lady Katherine in which Lady Nairne was laughing over the, 'Lenten

marriage to take place in Lent but openly admitting this would admit their adherence to Episcopalian traditions.⁸¹ Lady Nairne concluded it was worth asking the question just to laugh at their discomfort and hear what answer might be given by way of explanation. The marriage did not take place until after Lent and there does not appear to have been any adverse reaction anyway but this shows that there was pressure to adhere to religious principles. The Atholl lands were predominately Episcopalian so the pressure to conform to religious traditions might well have stemmed from local expectation and not entirely from within the family.⁸² The playful attitude of Lady Nairne provides a sharp contrast to the strict religious manner of Lady Katherine, finding it laughable that such efforts had to be made to accommodate religious principles and poking fun at relatives over this and Lady Katherine's 'Yule goose'. In an age where serious religiosity could define a noblewoman's character it was obviously a trait Lady Nairne eschewed.

However, even less obviously devout noblewomen could stress the importance of a religious issue if this suited their objectives. Lady Nairne wrote to Lady Panmure in 1709 giving her views on Atholl's plans to marry again after the death of Lady Katherine in 1707. Considering the proposed bride, Lady Mary Ross (d. 1767), Lady Nairne exclaimed she was, 'young and a Presbyterian, is all I shall say, but the world is not so modest in their discourses about her'.⁸³ Pronouncing Lady Ross quite 'unfit' to

scruples of the old folk,' but thinks the marriage should proceed quickly as the financial issues were most pressing and need to be settled.

⁸¹ Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, pp. 125-126; The Marchioness answered her son's concerns on this matter by stating that the Marquis was most keen for the nuptials not to take place in Lent and that he would not be persuaded on the matter, this actually contradicts Lady Nairne's account of the situation, see Blair MS 45.(2).71 Amelia, Marchioness of Atholl to Earl of Tullibardine, [Blair] 7 March 1702.

⁸² The need for nobles to maintain the support of those within their land and estates is explained by Bruce Lenman who also argues that religion was a hugely important factor after the Revolution although not all historians have recognised this, see Lenman, 'Scottish Nobility and the Revolution', pp.147-149.

⁸³ NAS GD45/14/245/18, Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 25 July 1709. Both Lady Nairne and Lady Panmure had to rely on the patronage of Lady Mary Ross after the Rebellion of 1715 and Szechi notes how this confirmed Lady Mary's new status and social ascendancy.

be Atholl's wife Lady Nairne focused on the bride's religious inclination rather than expose any truly objectionable behaviour. Whether Lady Nairne merely preferred those of the same religious principles to be admitted to the family or whether she hoped for someone with similar Jacobite tendencies to her own is unclear. Atholl was not deterred by his female relatives and married Lady Ross in 1710. Lady Nairne lost favour with Atholl in subsequent years and in 1715 three of his sons chose to support the Jacobites in the family. Atholl denounced Lady Nairne as he blamed, 'the ruine of my three sons to her artifices'.⁸⁴ Just as Atholl's parents had not prevented him from becoming a Presbyterian neither could he exert sufficient influence over his sons to keep them loyal to his chosen faith. That Atholl blamed Lady Nairne points to men's acknowledgment of women's abilities to influence but his inability to counter her authority is also worth considering.

The family as a whole had differences in faith and doctrine and also diverse attitudes in their loyalty to the crown. Lady Nairne epitomises those without a strong faith, mocking and teasing the seriousness of others with a notable religiosity. Contrasting her to Lady Katherine's serious devotion and powerful belief we find two ends of the religious spectrum at work in one family. That these two women enjoyed a good relationship, embraced their arguments of faith and coped with the religious jostling between their relations is an important observation on noblewomen managing the broader family interests. Religion, like politics, was a personal choice but confirming that noblewomen of opposing views could put the family first demonstrates the priorities of powerful women. Religion however was still a powerful means used by some noblewomen to achieve their own ends.

However galling this was for Lady Nairne and Lady Panmure it demonstrates once more that religion was no barrier to securing the future of the family, see Szechi, *1715*, pp. 245-246.

⁸⁴ Graham, 'A Bundle of Jacobite Letters'.

Lady Katherine as a Writer

Lady Katherine's religious writings have to be considered within the broader context of early modern women's writing to be fully appreciated. She was similar to other women of the period in that her writing contains biblical references both illustrating her knowledge of the Bible and her personalization of the texts she chose and interpreted.⁸⁵ The Book of Psalms particularly lends itself to 'literary self invention' with biblical quotes and the writer's interpretation of these being central to women's self expression.⁸⁶ Lady Katherine's choices on who to pray for, which sermons to meditate on, which ministers to correspond with or promote were all similar concerns for contemporaries, both men and women. If women engaged with religion they could confront masculine figures either by adhering to their own spirituality or challenging those ministers who did not warrant their approbation.⁸⁷ Lady Katherine's writings reveal real concerns over her husband's lack of spirituality. Although she called this a 'fear' she had for him, expressing this view exposes her disapproval and suggests that although she respected her husband this did not prevent her from seeing his faults. Patriarchy and status did not outweigh religiosity in her mind.

Lady Katherine refers to ministers she knew but there was no mention of a close spiritual relationship between her and any particular minister.⁸⁸ The spiritual memoir of James Erskine, Lord Grange gives a useful comparison with contemporary male

⁸⁵ Mullan, *Life Writing*, pp. 1-22.

⁸⁶ Mullan, *Life Writing*, p. 17. See also Mullan's transcription of the self writing of Henrietta Lindsay, Mullan, *Life Writing*, pp. 204-353 which gives a useful comparison on use of scripture, similarities in expression, relationships and knowledge of preaching and ministers' work.

⁸⁷ Mullan, *Life Writing*, pp. 16-17; J. Couchman and A. Crabb, 'Form and Persuasion in Women's Letters, 1400-1700', in J. Couchman and A. Crabb (eds.) *Women's Letters Across Europe, 1400-1700* (Aldershot, 2005), pp. 3-21.

⁸⁸ Letters reveal she knew of those ministers already mentioned and one Mr Wylie who Lady Yester noted as entertaining in 1702, see Blair MS 45.(2).132 Susan, Lady Yester to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine [Dalgaty] 19 May 1702. Other women writers also mentioned ministers and appear to have had religious discussions, prayers and attended services of those they name. Katharine Collace had to leave one town she lived in as she was 'noticed as fearing God more than' others did and Mullan suggests those striving to be holy found jealousy from others, see Mullan, *Life Writing*, p. 49.

writing.⁸⁹ Although dated 1717 he was reflecting upon the period prior to union and he too mentioned ministers, sermons and various scriptures and important texts, as Lady Katherine did, often quoting and analysing Bible references in a similar language and tone. Grange differs because he wrote about those with whom he had shared spiritual discussion and used his memoir to meditate further on this and his related reading and education. He included great detail on visiting a woman called Mrs Brown who claimed to have visions and spiritual experiences and Grange was most intrigued by the idea of ‘natural Extasy’ and wrote about, ‘Mr Locke [describing this as] dreaming with the eyes open’.⁹⁰ He described lengthy exchanges with Mrs Brown but emphasised the mediation of a minister, Mr Laggan. Laggan was trusted by Mrs Brown and was important to Grange who admitted his own inability to interpret the women’s behaviour was due to his lack of spiritual awareness.⁹¹ Grange also revealed an element of self interest in this woman. Although he professed a religious curiosity he appeared flattered she would ‘converse willingly’ with him and hoped that she might, ‘be shown something about him’, in her visions.⁹² His interest therefore was not purely religious and he risked impropriety by attempting to see her alone. Lady Katherine never betrayed any personal religious involvement with anyone in her journal save her husband and, like other women writers who prided themselves on their relationship with God, she did not need the mediation of others.

Like Lady Katherine, Grange berated himself in his memoir for ‘backsliding’ and not spending enough time in religious pursuits and also used the journal to lash himself over previous ‘debauched’ behaviour. He explained the tragedy of his marriage and also used the memoir to write about his brother the Earl of Mar and their roles in public

⁸⁹ NAS GD124/15/1179 Spiritual Diary of Lord Grange, Memoirs VII, 13th October 1717 to 5th November 1718.

⁹⁰ NAS GD124/15/1179 Grange Memoirs, p. 48.

⁹¹ NAS GD124/15/1179 Grange Memoirs, pp. 83, 90-92, 105.

⁹² NAS GD124/15/1179 Grange Memoirs, p. 48.

life at that time.⁹³ Grange was writing of events in Lady Katherine's lifetime but as a memoir it has a retrospective nature which differs from her diarist style. Her only retrospective act was to collate the material and instruct that it was given to her husband as her death became imminent. In this she and Grange differ again as his memoir, although not obviously written for publication, had some clear intention of being instructive and for family consumption. Lady Katherine's writing was only assembled, copied and preserved through her husband's attention. The publication of a full transcription was an outcome she may never have intended.

In this aspect of writing Lady Katherine again has much in common with other women writing in this period. Spiritual self writings and autobiography provided an acceptable motive for women to write about more than just their religious lives and many of these were published posthumously by men.⁹⁴ In writing a religious diary or journal women could make sense of their lives and express their thoughts and concerns on less spiritual matters. Lady Katherine's diary is certainly indicative of this but access to her correspondence gives a far greater understanding of her life. As a singular work it traces her marital concerns, the political pressures on the family and highlights her religious reaction to these events. That she so often rebuked herself for minding 'earthly matters' too much also illustrates how often family and politics distracted her from the spiritual life she craved. Lord Grange openly confessed to years of neglecting his faith admitting that, 'vain company [and] a desire to be like the rest of the world', all led to a profane life in which, 'I drunk & whor'd and followed carnal

⁹³ NAS GD124/15/1179 Grange Memoirs, pp. 25, 33 and 90.

⁹⁴ Hobby, *Virtue of Necessity*, pp. 66-69. Hobby highlights the works of various English women in this slightly earlier period naming Sarah Wight, Jane Turner and Anne Venn, none of whom appear to be of noble birth. Mullan, *Life Writings*, pp. 204-353, Henrietta Lindsay's writing was published in part in the Lindsay family history, Lindsay, *Lives of the Lindsays* and Lindsay, *Countess of Balcarres*. Mullan also used parts of Henrietta's writing which was included in Robert Wodrow, *The History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland from the Restoration to the Revolution* (Glasgow, 1842-3).

Pleasure'.⁹⁵ George Baillie of Jerviswood adopted a deeply devotional lifestyle in his later years and Sir John Clerk of Penicuik (1679-1722) was another man who led a spiritual life. That their spirituality has been acknowledged suggests that this was a noteworthy characteristic if not unusual.⁹⁶ The devotional writing of men was similar to women such as Lady Henrietta Lindsay, Katharine Collace and Lillias Dunbar.⁹⁷ Lady Katherine is another within this group of Scottish women writers. Their letters, publications and personal writing make an important contribution to our understanding of female religiosity with Lady Katherine's diary particularly indicative of noblewomen in the era of Revolution and Union.

Similar examination of English women's writing suggests that women's, 'articulation of religious beliefs necessarily situated them within a political debate, whether they consciously acknowledged it or not'.⁹⁸ The same can be said of Scottish noblewomen. Religion was an important element in deciding whether to pledge allegiance to William and Mary after the Revolution and within later union debates.⁹⁹ Noblewomen had an opinion on religious matters as well as politics and some readily shared their views. Lady Nairne discussed religious issues openly with Lady Panmure referring to family disputes over non-jurors in Perthshire and considering which of their neighbours to the, 'westward of the Tay', and, 'the earls to the east', had, 'never let a Presbyterian set their nose in [their] Interests'. Further letters show that when she

⁹⁵ NAS GD124/15/1179 Grange Memoirs, p.152. Other useful male comparisons include men such as Robert Wodrow, Alexander Brodie and the ministers' sons Robert Fleming, Thomas Hog and John Welwood see Mullan, *Life Writing*, pp. 41, 60, 80-81 and 214.

⁹⁶ Stanhope, *Memoirs*; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 51 and 81.

⁹⁷ Mullan, *Life Writing*, pp. 19-22; Trill, *Lady Anne Halkett*.

⁹⁸ S. Trill, K. Chedzoy and M. Osborne (eds.), *Lay by Your Needles Ladies, Take the Pen, Writing Women in England 1500-1700* (London, 1997) pp. 1-17.

⁹⁹ The Marquis and Marchioness of Atholl faced these difficulties immediately after the Revolution and then again in 1691 when they used the health of the Marquis to avoid taking the oath, see Atholl, *Chronicles, I*, pp.271-180 and Blair MS 29.I.(6).11 Katherine, Lady Murray to Lord Murray, [Paisley] 17 June 1691 and Blair MS 29.I.(6).12, Anne, Duchess of Hamilton to Lord Murray, [Holyroodhouse] 19 June 1691. The importance of religion has been stressed by some historians and yet ignored by others, Bruce Lenman particularly points to the work of Patrick Riley as discounting religion, see Lenman, 'The Scottish Nobility and the Revolution', p. 145, see also Stephen, *Scottish Presbyterians* and D.J. Patrick, 'The Kirk, Parliament and the Union, 1706-7'.

travelled she gathered as much information she could to gauge reaction to union and related religious issues.¹⁰⁰ Lady Nairne's activities could be said to stem from her Jacobitism, especially her attempts to decide who might be supportive of the Stuarts, but these issues encompassed religion and politics alike.

Lady Katherine's understanding and involvement with the politics of the period are found in her religious meditation on the impending union of Scotland with England.

Written in October of 1706:

Remember o my soule when thou wast much troubled and exercised about the sad case and condition of this nation in relation to the dishonourable union proposed between the two nations having gott letters between sermons that it was like to carry...¹⁰¹

She noted that she had attended a church service that day and that her worry over Union had been alleviated by the singing of a psalm, recalling that, 'God comforted thee concerning it [union]', and, 'ye 37ps [psalm]...was sung with such power to thee that thou wast made to rejoyce and bless the lord'. She noted particularly that the third verse, which she believed encouraged her to trust in God, 'was what I thought the lord gave me to my selfe', and although she despaired that, 'I thought I should have nothing for poor Scotland', she looked to the subsequent verses and found 'greater comfort' in the words; 'delight thy selfe in God he'll give thine hearts desire to thee'.¹⁰² She wrote:

And tho I cannot se how yet I desire to trust him that he'll
bring to pass the good of this land & put a stop to the uniting

¹⁰⁰ NAS GD45/14/246/8 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 18 January 1705. In 1709 Lady Nairne travelled to London to support her husband who had been arrested for Jacobite activity and discussed the Union, the overthrow of Presbytery and the differences between Queen Anne and King William with a fellow traveller, see NAS GD45/14/246/11 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [York] 10 May 1709.

¹⁰¹ Blair MS 29.II.4.

¹⁰² Blair MS 29.II.4.

of it on such monstrous ill terms both to church and state &
that he may open all peoples eyes espasily his owne that they may
have no hand in the union & destruction of their native country.¹⁰³

Katherine's heart's desire was to see union defeated and Scotland delivered from what she believed would be ruinous to the country.¹⁰⁴ Her sentiments on this issue were preserved along with her religious diary and some of her correspondence which all testify to her firm religious belief. Married to one of the principal players opposing union and a daughter of the formidable Duchess Anne and so a sister to the leader of the opposition the Duke of Hamilton, her stance was understandable. Lady Katherine's diary demonstrates that her politics were informed by faith, her correspondence illustrates her involvement in her husband's career and she made no apology for writing about these issues. That she did so in the form of a spiritual diary places her writing within understood parameters of early modern women in both England and Europe. Her writing is comparable with women of lesser status within the period and her motives of instruction, reflection and making sense of her life are apparent in the description she provides on the practical application of her religious belief. The diary reveals the tensions between Presbyterian and Episcopalian belief both within the family and estate as well as in the politics which shaped her husband's career and which defined their life together. Viewed within a broader context Lady Katherine's diary indicates one Scottish noblewoman's piety, the challenges she faced in family and political life and how she confronted these and justified her actions through religious belief.

¹⁰³ Blair MS 29.II.4.

¹⁰⁴ A letter of 1702 states her earlier opposition to union writing 'I'm really very hard of faith in it...' suggesting her opinion was held over many years, see Blair MS 45.(2).114 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 23 April 1702.

Chapter 4

Estate Management

The Scottish nobleman's ownership of land, like that of his English and European counterparts, secured his primary source of status and wealth.¹ While prosperity and position were obviously important it was the ownership of estates yielding significant rental income which provided a noble with the right to sit in parliament, so that land was seen as, 'a primary source of political influence'.² This vital asset, which allowed Scots noblemen to participate as part of the country's governing elite, presented a challenge in terms of administration. Undertaking a political role and career in office required nobles to be absent from their estates while they attended parliament in Edinburgh or the Court in London. Geographical constraints were not confined to Scots, as noblemen in most states often lived far from the political centre and might be absent from their estates due to military service, state business, economic concerns as well as

¹ R. S. Rait, 'The Scottish Parliament before the Union of the Crowns', in *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 15, No. 58 (April, 1900), pp. 209-237; Smout, *History of the Scottish People*, pp. 135-144; Riley, *Union*, pp. 12-14; R. Mitchison, *Lordship to Patronage Scotland 1603-1745* (London, 1983), pp. 6-8; J. Stuart Shaw, *The Management of Scottish Society 1707-1764* (Edinburgh, 1983), pp. 2-3; E. Cregeen, 'The Changing Role of the House of Argyll in the Scottish Highlands', in N. T. Phillipson and R. Mitchison (eds.) *Scotland in the Age of Improvement* (Edinburgh, 1970), pp. 5-23; Houston and Whyte, *Scottish Society*, pp. 10-11; Goodare, *State and Society*, pp. 286-288; Brown, *Noble Society*, pp. 40-47; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 104; R. G. Asch, *Nobilities in Transition 1550-1700, Courtiers and Rebels in Britain and Europe* (London, 2003), pp. 33-44; J. R. Wordie, *Estate Management in Eighteenth Century England* (London, 1982), pp. 1-4; J. V. Becket, *The Aristocracy in England 1660-1914* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 43-47.

² L. Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558-1641* (Oxford, 1965), pp. 273-275; Terry states that in 1689 Scottish nobles obtained legal recognition as being the possessors of peerages which meant noblemen summoned to parliament had to be noble, 'by birth, blood or inheritance', and had to be in possession of land with at least 10,000 Scots merks rental income per annum, see, C. S. Terry, *The Scottish Parliament: Its Constitution and Procedure, 1603 -1707* (Glasgow, 1905). pp. 12-14.

politics.³ The business of day to day management therefore fell to factors, or chamberlains, men who were often kin and who were trusted with the running of the estate.⁴ James Graham, first duke of Montrose, trusted his lifelong friend and kinsman, Mungo Graeme of Gorthie, with the bulk of his estate business. Similarly, the Earl of Mar employed George and David Erskine, among others, to manage much of his business.⁵ Evidence exists of the close working relationships which developed between noblemen and their factors.⁶ The complex business of estate management itself suggests that many of these men were well educated in the vital legal and financial aspects such work required.⁷

However, male kinsmen or factors were not the only option a nobleman had when choosing a trusted administrator to direct affairs in his absence. Noblewomen have been acknowledged as being highly competent in supervising the domestic and household requirements of the family but some were equally skilled in estate management, overseeing the financial, legal and agricultural business this encompassed.⁸ George Baillie of Jerviswood credited his wife Lady Grisell as having, ‘the whole management of his affairs’, and trusted her with such confidence that all he required to know of his finances was whether, ‘his debt was paid’.⁹ Lady Grisell followed the example of her mother, also Lady Grisell, wife of Patrick, Lord Polwarth and later first earl of

³ Lukowski, *Nobility*, pp. 20-22; Dewald, *European Nobility*, pp. 20-28.

⁴ Leneman, *Atholl*, pp. 15-27.

⁵ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, pp. 263-264; NAS GD124/15/231/1-8 Letters from Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, 1704-1705.

⁶ Graeme of Gorthie is alleged to have secured the trust of Montrose after securing a property deal in 1703, see Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, pp. 262; Mar wrote to George Erskine that whatever Alexander Rait wrote to him about, ‘answer it as if it were from me’, see NAS GD124/15/474, Earl of Mar to George Erskine, [Edinburgh], 16 November 1706; Leneman, *Atholl*, pp. 20-21.

⁷ Leneman highlights the, ‘professionalism of factors and the highly legalistic nature of their work’, see Leneman, *Atholl*, pp. 28.

⁸ Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, pp. 144-145; M. Lochhead, *The Scots Household in the Eighteenth Century* (Edinburgh, 1948), pp. 17-33; Kelsall, *Scottish Lifestyle*, pp. 230-231.

⁹ Stanhope, *Memoir*, pp. 72-73; Murison, ‘Lapidary Inscriptions’, pp. 99 -112.

Marchmont.¹⁰ Her account books cover the period he was Chancellor of Scotland from 1696 to 1702 and reveal her ability to cope with the increased household and domestic challenges his new position brought.¹¹ Not only do they illustrate her ability to manage this transition in his career they also demonstrate how she negotiated the minefield of political entertaining which was required.¹² Noblewomen did not simply confine their management skills to domestic and household affairs. Lady Helen Hope, the wife of Thomas, sixth lord Haddington, was acknowledged to have had such influence on her husband in the matter of tree planting and husbandry that her 'advice and example' led him to, 'devote his mind to the improvement and beautifying of his Tynninghame estate'.¹³ Lady Helen may have been blessed with the necessary 'discretion and taste',¹⁴ yet strangely it was her husband who was referred to as the improver even though she outlived him by thirty-three years.

Noblewomen walked a fine line when balancing acceptable levels of support and administration for men in the family with wifely duty. Prudent management, careful accounting and sound advice had to be provided without overstepping patriarchal boundaries. Writing in January of 1697 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, informed her husband that the Duke of Queensberry was on his way to London and that his wife would be unable to accompany him because she was thought to be pregnant. Lady Katherine believed that the Duchess would not be pleased as, 'she has the intyre management of her lord', and would not relish being left behind.¹⁵ This illustrates a distinct contrast between noblewomen like the Duchess of Queensberry, with others

¹⁰ Warrender, *Marchmont and Humes*, pp. 59-60; Kelsall, *Scottish Lifestyle*, p. 15; Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, pp. 12-14.

¹¹ Kelsall, *Scottish Lifestyle*, pp. 206-209; Scott-Moncrieffe, *Household Book*.

¹² Kelsall, *Scottish Lifestyle*, pp. 206-226.

¹³ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, IV, pp. 320-321.

¹⁴ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, IV, pp. 320-321.

¹⁵ Blair MS 29.I.(9).26 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Edinburgh] 26 January 1697.

such as Lady Grisell Baillie. Being positively regarded within the family for having good management skills was quite different to having others perceive female management as controlling men.

Archibald Kerr wrote to Mar in 1696 concerning the payment of money due to one Elizabeth Reid and, in frustration at her persistence, he dubbed her, ‘a very clamorous womane’.¹⁶ Those who benefitted from her ‘clamorous’ nature in securing the money which was due to her were probably not so disapproving of her determination. It is difficult to judge noblewomen’s real management abilities from these reactions as one person’s capable administrator could be another person’s interfering harridan. Personal disputes or political rivalries between families would also influence how women within those families were regarded. It is important to note, if possible, both family attitudes to noblewomen and also gauge how those outwith the family regarded women’s efforts in order to gain a clear idea of acceptable and non-acceptable female behaviour.

Family relations could suffer if women overtly involved themselves in the, perceived, business of men. In 1707 James Carnegie, fifth earl of Southesk (1692-1730), left his home on the pretext of going hunting. He was actually making his escape from his mother’s control as he was, ‘wearie of the confinement’, she imposed upon him.¹⁷ He had written and informed his tutors of his decision and wanted his mother removed from the family home as he, ‘was determined not to live longer with her’.¹⁸ The Dowager Countess lived thereafter in her jointure house of Leuchars Castle and was later credited with encouraging her son to join the Jacobite rebellion of 1715.¹⁹ Although it seems mother and son salvaged their relationship, his earlier actions suggest

¹⁶ NAS GD124/15/203 Archibald Kerr to Earl of Mar, [Kildrummy] 14 November 1696.

¹⁷ The situation that Southesk found himself in was mentioned as gossip in a letter from Harry Maule to the Earl of Mar, see NAS GD124/15/549/12 Harry Maule to Earl of Mar, [Edinburgh] 27 September 1707.

¹⁸ NAS GD124/15/549/12 Harry Maule to Earl of Mar, [Edinburgh] 27 September 1707

¹⁹ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VIII, pp. 72- 73.

that her control over his affairs and the estate were oppressive and they were clearly the subject of gossip.

It is important to recognise the subtlety noblewomen employed to secure the freedom they needed to operate as managers. Christian, Duchess of Montrose, wrote to her husband about household matters but reported that the factor, Gorthie, would furnish him with estate news, 'so I shall not pretend to do it'.²⁰ This should not be taken to mean she did not care or know what was happening; just that two accounts of the same news was hardly useful and reporting business twice was time consuming. Readily acknowledging that Gorthie would report on the estate suggests her contact with him and her trust in him to do so. Unlike Gorthie she filled her letters to her husband with more personal news and any political gossip she heard. This was an equal exchange between them and she also requested that he send her the 'tattler' to keep herself ahead of current affairs.²¹ Acknowledging these details is central to fully comprehending the role of women. It is important to recognize that noblemen frequently colluded with the manoeuvring of women and, as long as female behaviour remained socially acceptable, men benefitted from the expertise of a talented wife or mother. What these examples demonstrate is the ability of noblewomen to develop business and management skills, if they had that capability, regardless of gender and social constraints. These restrictions were not fixed and noblewomen could easily circumvent them and pursue business in the family interest.

While there is evidence of noblewomen being actively engaged in running estates and having sound financial skills particular studies exploring what Scottish

²⁰ NAS GD220/5/215/1-17 Christian, Duchess of Montrose to Duke of Montrose, 24 November -31 December 1709.

²¹ This is evidence of noblewomen requesting their husbands to send London publications north to inform them of political news; the Edinburgh version of the Tatler was not printed until 1711. NAS GD220/5/215/8 Christian, Duchess of Montrose to Duke of Montrose, [Edinburgh] 10 December 1709.

noblewomen actually did in this regard are rare.²² Recognizing that noblewomen managed the estate is not enough, although management can be understood as an important means for noblewomen to develop their own capabilities and strengths. For some, such as Lady Grisell Baillie and Duchess Anne it was a lifelong undertaking and a distinguishing quality. Examining the various aspects of the household and estate, including domestic issues which involved noblewomen, provides a fuller picture of what exactly noblewomen as managers coped with. As well as the obvious estate business of farming, collecting rents and dealing with tenants, noblewomen could also find themselves providing for the spiritual needs of those who lived on the estates and making provision for the poor.²³ The skills noblewomen acquired in balancing the many challenges which day to day life on the estate brought were considerable but not unusual. Uncovering how noblewomen were regarded in this role reveals differing attitudes to women but these attitudes do not seem to have deterred noblewomen and suggests that women were not exactly restricted by social constraints. The level of freedom they attained to carry out the management of the family and household appears to have expanded to allow them even more freedom to manage estates, property and building. How did women stretch the domestic parameters to operate more fully and in less private areas such as property, business and finance? Coping with domestic issues and family concerns, such as illness or death, problems thrown up by staff and tenants,

²² Fairchild, *Women in Europe* makes reference to royal women governing on behalf of sons and influencing husbands but mainly discusses business and households in relation to lesser status women. Other studies on Scotland are concerned with lesser status women rather than noblewomen, see Smout, *History of the Scottish People*; R. Houston, 'Women in the Economy and Society of Scotland, 1500-1800' in Houston and Whyte, *Scottish Society*, pp. 118-147; H. Dingwall, 'The Power Behind the Merchant? Women and the Economy in Late Seventeenth Century Edinburgh', and E. Ewan, 'For Whatever Ales Ye: Women as Consumers and Producers in late Medieval Scottish Towns' both in Ewan and Meikle, *Women in Scotland*, pp. 125-152. Karl von den Steinen, published in the same volume, discusses noblewomen and politics but fails to make any connection between female political activity and estate management which involved the daughters of Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, see von den Steinen, 'Women's Political Activism', pp. 112-122. Rosalind Marshall however provides an excellent account of one noblewoman's estate building and management in Marshall, *Duchess Anne*.

²³ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p. 226.

as well as overseeing the grounds or building had to be tackled by noblewomen on a daily basis. Crisis management was no small part of their day and this challenged their management abilities as well as providing the opportunity to do more outwith the domestic realm.

Domestic and Household Concerns.

It is not clear how noblewomen gained the necessary skills for running an estate as these could not be said to stem from a comprehensive education. Sons could expect a wide ranging education but noblewomen were usually schooled in the finer accomplishments with instruction given in painting, sewing and dancing.²⁴ Not all young Scottish noblewomen would have learned such refined activities and the rudiments of reading and balancing the household accounts would have been considered more practical.²⁵ A good wife would have used her reading skills both for her own devotional studies and the instruction of her children as godliness was esteemed.²⁶ Managing money, however, was another valuable skill and noble wives who could control the family accounts were just as appreciated as pious ones.²⁷

Letters between noblewomen frequently mention the diverse domestic and household matters which were under their control. Details of these are found in letters

²⁴ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 146-147; Kelsall, *Scottish Lifestyle*, pp. 21.

²⁵ Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, p. 128. Katherine Glover points out that the, 'historiography of women's education in eighteenth century Britain is surprisingly thin and the Scottish situation even worse', see Glover, *Elite Women and Polite Society*, pp. 24-27. Stana Nenadic compares the education of the sons and daughters of 'gentry families' but as some noble wives would have 'married up' from these families of lesser status it is worth considering their education and practical household management see, Nenadic, *Lairds and Luxury*, pp. 45-64.

²⁶ Mullan, 'Parents and Children in Early Modern Scotland' pp. 73- 83.

²⁷ Murison, 'Lapidary Inscriptions', pp. 100-102; G. DesBrisay and K. Sander Thomson, 'Crediting Wives: Married Women and Debt Litigation in the seventeenth Century', in Ewan and Nugent, *Finding the Family*, pp. 85-98. Marshall notes that the Duke of Hamilton gave his daughter an allowance to compel her to manage her own finances in anticipation of managing the household, see Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p. 146.

between women sharing advice on securing produce or quality goods at the right price. Lady Yester wrote to her sister-in-law Lady Katherine in 1701 discussing the quality of linen, commenting that in Edinburgh it was, ‘dearer this yeare than in former yeares’.²⁸ Lady Yester had therefore sent money with her letter so that Lady Katherine could purchase locally produced linen on her behalf. Other brief comments in letters reveal consumer choices and domestic concerns. Correspondents advised the purchase of brandy over sack when it ‘continues cheap’ and how to use home grown produce in preserving or brewing features alongside discussions on securing enough provisions for feeding the household and entertaining guests.²⁹ A noble household encompassed a great many people and the expense of keeping the family, servants and outdoor staff as well as providing for visitors was a major concern.³⁰ Special occasions required even more expense.³¹ Lady Katherine wrote to her brother, Hamilton, in 1702 congratulating him on the birth of a son by his second, English, wife Lady Elizabeth. She remarked on a new custom that was the norm, ‘in that Country [England]’, and described how everyone who came to see the baby, ‘gives them a present, some a purs of gould & some a piece of plate’.³² Lady Katherine seemed delighted with this custom as she expected her brother would receive so many presents, ‘as to defray all the expenses of

²⁸ Blair MS 45.(1).227 Susan, Lady Yester to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Dalgaty] 18 August 1701.

²⁹ NAS GD124/15/231/9, Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 19 June 1705; NAS GD124/15/231/13, Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 23 August 1705; Blair MS 45.(2).76 Amelia, Marchioness of Atholl to Earl of Tullibardine, [Dunkeld] 16 March 1702; NAS GD406/1/7074 Duke of Hamilton to Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton, [London] 27 March 1703; NAS GD124/15/231/11 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 16 July 1705; NAS GD45/14/245/8 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 18 January 1705; NAS GD45/14/245/11 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [York] 10 May 1708; Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 362.

³⁰ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 62-82; Kelsall, *Scottish Lifestyle*, pp. 206-222.

³¹ An example of this and how noblewomen managed the expense is found in the letters between Mary, Dowager Countess of Mar to her son Lord Grange on the death of the Lady Mar. Her funeral arrangements and the cost were all managed by the Dowager; see NAS GD124/15/552/1 Mary, Countess of Mar to Lord Grange, [Dupplin House] 19 April 1707; NAS GD124/15/552/2 Mary, Countess of Mar to Lord Grange, [Dupplin House] 21 April 1707.

³² NAS GD406/1/6497 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Duke of Hamilton, [Huntingtower] 20 January 1702.

her [the Duchess'] lying in'.³³ While commenting on it as a new custom, and no doubt having to supply a gift herself, Lady Katherine clearly understood the value of this gift-giving as benefitting the entire family and not just the child.

The expenditure for travelling to and staying in London was prohibitive and even the expense of lodging in Edinburgh was costly.³⁴ Keeping horses, supplying necessary provisions and even washing linen were all discussed along with the challenge of obtaining decent cooks and servants as well as how much to pay them.³⁵ Writing from London, Lady Nairne discussed the purchase and 'making up' of material for, 'winter gowns and petticoats', along with weaving and making candles while assuring Lady Panmure that she had, 'forgot no part of houswifry by [being] long at court'.³⁶ Lady Nairne was in London to secure the release of her husband and as the expense of living there was so great, and his position so uncertain, her 'thrift', as she referred to it, was understandable.

The expense of living in a style befitting noble status was a continual concern for noblewomen especially if promotion warranted more expensive trappings such as furnishings and lavish entertaining. Lady Grisell, wife of Marchmont, undertook an extraordinary purchase of goods to decorate and furnish their new Holyrood apartments when he became Chancellor of Scotland in 1696.³⁷ Wall hangings, beds and chairs were required as well as a coach sent from London and assorted crockery and china were all

³³ NAS GD406/1/6497 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Duke of Hamilton, [Huntingtower] 20 January 1702

³⁴ Marshall, *Virgin and Viragos*, pp. 128; Lady Dundonald commented on the expense of living in London and the exchange rate, Blair MS 29.I.(7).154 Susan, Countess of Dundonald to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [London] 6 July 1695; Blair MS 29.I.(7).158 Susan, Countess of Dundonald to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [London] 18 July 1696.

³⁵ NAS GD124/15/231/9 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 29 June 1705; NAS GD124/15/231/10 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 4 July 1705; NAS GD124/15/231/15 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 30 August 1705.

³⁶ NAS GD45/14/245/8 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 18 January 1705; NAS GD45/14/245/12 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [London] 15 May 1709.

³⁷ Kelsall, *Scottish Lifestyle*, p. 206.

purchased for the entertaining his new position demanded. A close relative, George Home, believed the couple had overspent by £1200 by 1698.³⁸ The same was true of the Earl and Countess of Tullibardine when he became Secretary of State in 1696. His letters from London suggest that they borrowed money to furnish new lodgings while he stressed the need for buying a coach and horses, among other things, to live up to his new position.³⁹ Lady Katherine clearly followed fashionable trends and in 1703 gave instructions to her sister-in-law Katherine, Lady Dunmore (d. 1711) to buy china when in London. Although Lady Dunmore reported that, ‘delph [Delftware] is now quite despis’d’, and ‘japan china’ was in fashion, the four guineas she had received from Tullibardine would not, ‘reach a set of yt kind’.⁴⁰ Undaunted, Lady Dunmore sourced a cheaper alternative with the advice to Lady Katherine, ‘that if you care to call it japan china few in Scotland will mind the difference’.⁴¹

The expense which went hand in hand with office also tested the Earl of Mar who decided to pay off his Scottish servants and close up his home at Alloa in preparation for taking up his appointment as Secretary of State. His detailed instructions to Lady Mar cover various domestic issues from deciding which servants to retain, who might serve as a butler, how to find a cook and planning for the ‘London jurny’.⁴² These letters not only show the pressures on nobles to maintain the proper level of grandeur commensurate with their position but also reveal the efforts of wives

³⁸ Kelsall, *Scottish Lifestyle*, p. 206.

³⁹ Blair MS 29.I.(8).18 Lord Murray to Katherine, Lady Murray, [London] 18 January 1696.

⁴⁰ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 503; Blair MS 45.(3).21 Katherine, Countess of Dunmore to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine [London] 28 January 1703.

⁴¹ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 503; Blair MS 45.(3).21 Katherine, Countess of Dunmore to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine [London] 28 January 1703.

⁴² NAS GD124/15/231/16 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 7 September 1705. Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton wrote on all manner of domestic concerns to her husband while he was in Edinburgh sending him small gifts and provisions and even preventing a fire at their home, see NAS GD406/1/6888 Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton to Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 24 January 1704; NAS GD406/1/6889 Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton to Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 30 January 1704; NAS GD406/1/6890 Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton to Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 1 February 1704; NAS GD406/1/6894 Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton to Duke of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 8 February 1704.

to support this effort. Careful household management, securing bargains and purchasing goods carefully, as well as firm management of staff, were evidently superior qualities in a wife. The underlying force however was the importance of gaining office and maintaining this, whatever the cost.

Domestic management and general expenditure could appear to be somewhat inconsequential but the way women coped allows us to grasp the extent of their role when they added estate management as a further responsibility. Limitations of time and space make a fuller discussion of material culture impossible but, in the context of union, exploring domestic or general expenditure and attitudes to the expense of holding office it is possible to see clear connections between the domestic role of women and the public role of men.⁴³ The distinctions of ‘public’ and ‘private’ become less clear when we find noblewomen operating not only within the household but also within associated buildings, farms and the wider estate.⁴⁴ Acknowledging noblewomen actively participating in a wider sphere than merely the domestic allows us to establish the areas women inhabited, where they created space for themselves.⁴⁵ Confining them to a realm of domestic activity contradicts the reality that female expertise in wide ranging legal and financial business was not only tolerated but was actually positively

⁴³ I have confined a fuller discussion of material culture to interspersed examples of noblewomen exchanging and acquiring gifts, purchases, recipes, remedies, sermons and advice. In terms of estate management aspects of material culture can only be touched upon although the letters provide a rich resource for pursuing this theme much further in future research. This chapter is intended to uncover the roles and abilities of noblewomen and how they helped fulfil the requirements of noble hospitality, political and social entertainment. Gift giving and using purchases and items to create opportunities and patronage has been explored for English noblewomen, see, Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 75-79; F. Heal, ‘Food Gifts, the Household and the Politics of Exchange in Early Modern England’, *Past and Present*, No. 199 (May, 2008), pp. 40-70; F. Heal, ‘The Idea of Hospitality in Early Modern England’, *Past and Present*, No. 102 (February, 1984), pp. 66-93. Keith Brown covers similar themes for an earlier period, see, K. Brown, *Noble Power in Scotland from the Reformation to the Revolution* (Edinburgh, 2011), pp. 62-66.

⁴⁴ I am grateful to Felicity Maxwell and Sarah French for ideas and discussion on the perceived boundaries of the homes and wider estates suggested by their presentation paper, ‘Space, Place and Environment: Concepts of Femininity and Authority in Early Modernity’, Attending to Early Modern Women Conference 2012.

⁴⁵ Susan Amussen states that it is, ‘inappropriate to dismiss what happens within the family as ‘private’... when the family was a central institution in English society’. The same is true for Scottish families, see S. D. Amussen, *An Ordered Society, Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (New York, 1988).

regarded. In making this point clear it is possible to credit noblewomen with a far greater sphere of influence than has previously been believed.

Under Female Management.

Rent collecting was another onerous task which noblewomen also supervised and one which also falls outwith the domestic or household. A social history of the Atholl estates gives the earliest surviving reference to the difficulties of rent collecting as January of 1696. The problems associated with the 'ill years' of the 1690's will be dealt with shortly but this reference is important because the sub-factor, James Murray of Tullibardine, was writing to a woman: Lady Katherine.⁴⁶ As well as providing the earliest reference to rent collecting issues at Blair her correspondence also gives a good account of what women managing an estate dealt with. Her letters, dating from the 1680s to her death in 1707, detail her complete involvement in all manner of estate business and matters relating to the household. More importantly they give a clear insight into how this informed and encouraged her political motivation and activity. Lady Katherine's letters reveal a noblewoman who embraced numerous female roles as seen in her piety, her role as a confidante and advisor to her husband and also as someone with strong political views. Estate manager can be added to the list of her talents and her experience provides a useful standard for assessing what noblewomen could achieve.

Lady Katherine's letters highlight the sheer hard work which overseeing the household and estate demanded. In one letter alone estate news from James Murray covered everything from how the horses fared after a long journey, to where he should

⁴⁶ Leneman, *Atholl*, p. 27.

purchase hay and discussing whether to sell, 'the second stouk or mak it in malt'.⁴⁷ Further to this he reported that the groom was giving notice, the coachman needed payment and a 'glasier' had to be found and employed.⁴⁸ In the same letter he discussed collection of rents and also responded to her displeasure about an item which had been broken while being moved. Other letters reveal discussions over money, rents, payment and collection of debts as well as the price of cattle, the buying of fodder, grazing rights, planting, harvesting and work on hedges and ditches.⁴⁹ If we add to this Lady Katherine's involvement in family affairs such as marriage negotiations, her husband's regimental commitments, the care and education of the children, as well as the necessary letter writing to keep abreast of all these, then the demands on her time were considerable. It was little wonder she wrote to her husband that business, 'was very troublesome to me, as doing anything is except writing to you...'⁵⁰ Referring to business as troublesome was common enough but there is little evidence of women, once involved, shirking the responsibility.

Robert Kerr, first marquis of Lothian (1636-1703) was another noble who relied heavily on his wife and while in Bath for his health in 1693 he wrote to her reporting on

⁴⁷ Blair MS 29.I.(8).17 James Murray Factor to Lady Katherine Murray, [Tullibardine] 13 January 1696.

⁴⁸ Blair MS 29.I.(8).17 James Murray Factor to Lady Katherine Murray, [Tullibardine] 13 January 1696.

⁴⁹ Blair MS 45.(1).124 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Blair] 29 May 1701; Blair MS 45.(1).207 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, July 1701; Blair MS 45.(2).92 Katherine, Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Blair] 9 April 1702; Blair MS 45.(2).100 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Blair] 13 April 1702; Blair MS 45.(1).215 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Blair] 3-6 October 1702.

⁵⁰ Blair MS 29.I.(7).16 Katherine, Lady Murray to Lord Murray, [Edinburgh] 3 August 1693. A letter from Anne, Duchess of Buccleuch to the Countess of Eglinton admitted she could not wait on Lady Eglinton owing to, 'the many troublesome business I have heir', NAS GD3/5/814 Anne, Duchess of Buccleuch to Countess of Eglinton, [Bransholme] 30 September 1695. Margaret, Lady Nairne made similar excuses for not visiting her friend Margaret, Countess of Panmure complaining, 'one unlucky thing or other always hinders me from the satisfaction of conversing with you...' see, NAS GD45/14/245/3 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 20 February 1703. Similarly, Elizabeth, Countess of Orkney wrote to Lady Katherine in 1702 'ashamed' she had not answered her letter sooner but said 'I have a great deal of business and my head full of the loss of our estates...', Atholl, *Chronicles*, Vol. I, p. 475.

his progress, family news and various estate matters.⁵¹ These included tree planting and laying out the gardens as well as conveying instructions to workmen on his specific requirements.⁵² He discussed the merits of turning land over to farming, speculating that in three or four years, it would provide a, ‘pretty fair means and serve us plentifully with corne for both the house and stable’.⁵³ Before winter he wanted shelter provided for the deer on his estate and his wife was also asked to engage suitable tenants for the local inn.⁵⁴ He reminded Lady Lothian to supervise the chamberlain in collecting rents as, ‘a little omission in that affair looses it all’, and insisted on her overseeing the factor as, ‘my being almost never in the country may make him grow careless’.⁵⁵ Lothian was aware that his own presence at home might have commanded greater authority than his wife but overall his lengthy instructions and detailed plans for the garden suggest they were used to sharing these decisions. More importantly the idea that his authority was greater than hers was not so compelling as to bring him home and take charge in her stead. Like many nobles Lothian was able to remain out of the country because of his wife’s grasp on business and her ability to maintain authority of her own.

Lothian’s letters, like those of other nobles, are as important for what they do not say as much as for the information they do provide. When mentioning shelter for the deer he failed to stipulate where and how this was to be carried out so we must assume Lady Lothian knew. The task of finding new tenants was not referred to as exceptional so again it must have been a matter that was again understood by his wife. The

⁵¹ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, V, pp. 475-477; T. Clarke, ‘Kerr, Robert, first Marquis of Lothian (1636–1703)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15465, accessed 21 March 2011]

⁵² NAS GD40/2/8/50 Lothian to Anne, Lady Lothian, [Bath] 7 August 1693; NAS GD40/2/8/53 Lothian to Anne, Lady Lothian, [Bath] 16 August 1693; NAS GD40/2/8/54 Lothian to Anne, Lady Lothian, [Bath] 20 August 1693.

⁵³ NAS GD40/2/8/54 Lothian to Anne, Lady Lothian, [Bath] 20 August 1693.

⁵⁴ NAS GD40/2/8/60 Lothian to Anne, Lady Lothian, [Bath] 8 September 1693; NAS GD40/2/8/61 Lothian to Anne, Lady Lothian, [Bath] 13 September 1693; NAS GD40/2/8/62 Lothian to Anne, Lady Lothian, [Bath] 18 September 1693.

⁵⁵ NAS GD40/2/8/54 Lothian to Anne, Lady Lothian, [Bath] 20 August 1693.

gardening instructions were complex, demonstrating Lothian's vision of how the garden should eventually be, so this too suggests that her knowledge of the planning and planting was equal to his.

Letters from Mar to his wife in 1704 and 1705 are as informative as the Lothian letters even though no reply from Lady Mar has survived. A series of letters written in 1704 while he was in Edinburgh attending Parliament prior to his appointment as Secretary of State are illustrative of the many estate concerns which fell to wives. His letters outline a great deal of political news which will be dealt with in a further chapter but they also contain references to domestic and estate issues, requesting news of, 'what is doing about the house'.⁵⁶ This phrase is another indication of where men understood their wives to have authority because Mar incorporates both household and estate business among the political and makes no clear distinction in discussing all of these with his wife. Has she been perceived by him to have only a purely domestic role then his letters would have reflected this distinction. They do not and Mar readily mixed legal, financial business, estate work and news with Lady Mar as well as referring to George Erskine and Alexander Rait as his factors. Mar enclosed instructions for these men in his letters to Lady Mar and asked her to 'read, seal and send on' these orders and he certainly asked her to report on progress in planting and gardening.⁵⁷ It is clear that the business which occupied the men similarly engaged her attention.

In this period of their marriage Lady Mar was just beginning to develop her management skills. In one letter Mar wrote that he hoped she, 'would look to these

⁵⁶ NAS GD124/15/231/11 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 16 July 1705. Mar received letters of business from other related women including his grandmother who apologised to him for, 'medling in your business', but who did not refrain from continuing to do so, see NAS GD124/15/197 2 letters from Jane MacKenzie, Dowager Countess of Mar to Earl of Mar, September 1695; NAS GD124/15/223 Jane MacKenzie, Dowager Countess of Mar to Earl of Mar, [Muchalls] 2 October 1702 and NAS GD124/15/229 Jane MacKenzie, Dowager Countess of Mar to Earl of Mar, [Pitsligo] 29 January 1704.

⁵⁷ NAS GD124/15/231/16 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 7 September 1704.

things and inquire about them', as developing an interest in the estate would divert her and that it would please him if she came to, 'understand them as well as I'.⁵⁸ At this point Lady Mar was a young wife, unhappy at the absence of her husband, who demanded reassurance of his affection and intention to return home. His advice suggests that Mar had high hopes his wife would come to share his enthusiasm for the estate. The level of legal business and politics that he discussed in his letters with her certainly imply that this was already of interest to her. It was clear she asked for the parliamentary news as he sent her the 'printed papers' and he trusted her with his most confidential news.⁵⁹ Although these letters suggest Lady Mar had with the potential to have been a useful business partner and political confidante her true ability was never revealed as she died after the birth of their second son in 1707. However, these letters reveal the changing role of noblewomen within their relationships. They also demonstrate the huge amount of time and energy noble wives devoted to furthering the family interest and effectively illustrate that noblewomen developed their management skills, just as men did, over time. They further demonstrate that Mar at least did not see his wife's skills and abilities as situated only in the private or family sphere.

The Changing Roles of Noblewomen

The management activities of a noblewoman would have developed throughout her life as her own status altered from daughter to wife and then to mother or widow. They also adapted as the family fortunes did, for better or worse, over time. The family of the Earl of Marchmont lived in exile prior to 1688 while he was Lord Polwarth and this

⁵⁸ GD124/15/231/11 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 16 July 1705; GD124/15/231/12 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess Mar, [Edinburgh] 17 August 1705.

⁵⁹ GD124/15/231/10 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 4 July 1705; GD124/15/231/11 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 16 July 1705.

experience meant a severe reduction in their living standards.⁶⁰ Before his elevation in status Sir Patrick Hume was descended from the 'Lairds O Polwarth'.⁶¹ His wife, Grisell Kar, was daughter to Sir Thomas Kar of Cavers and little is known of her early life but neither of them was born into the level of noble status they eventually attained. Polwarth's service to William of Orange brought about his elevation and this resulted in a change of status for the whole family. His wife and daughter demonstrate that they had the capabilities to deal appropriately with the challenges this brought. Their life in exile is detailed in their family memoir and the women show a remarkable adaptability between managing the family on meagre funds, securing financial support when they could and then moving, with apparent ease, into a position of power and influence.⁶² The domestic details of how these women coped in exile should not detract from their ability to expand upon these skills when Marchmont's career, and the family interest, required them to.

Change in status and position could happen through various circumstances and noblewomen had to react quickly to acquire the necessary skills and abilities for coping with the practical management of family resources. John Cochrane, earl of Dundonald died in 1690 leaving his wife, Susan, Countess of Dundonald with three young children and, like many widows, she quickly took over the management of her son's interests to

⁶⁰ Ginny Gardener highlights that the forfeiture of estates of men who went into exile before the Revolution of 1688 meant their wives and female relations handled the legal issues, petitioned the crown for support and also became responsible for financing their extended families and households abroad, see G. Gardener, *The Scottish Exile Community in the Netherlands 1660-1690 'Shaken together in the Bag of Affliction'* (East Linton, 2004). Correspondence between the Earl of Marchmont's son Patrick, later Lord Polwarth, and his mother suggest he relied on her to send him money and manage business in his absence abroad, see NAS GD158/2818 thirty-one letters from Patrick, Lord Polwarth to Grisell, Lady Polwarth, 1679-1694.

⁶¹ Kelsall, *Scottish Lifestyle*, pp. 15-17. Relations of the Hume's of Polwarth include the Laird of Kimmerghame and comparing the correspondence between Kimmerghame and his wife and with his sister suggests that women of lesser status were equally involved with business see, NAS GD158/2720, seven letters from Katherine Hume to her husband John Home of Blackadder, Laird of Kimmerghame, 1669; NAS GD158/2758 fourteen letters from Isobel Home to her brother John Home of Blackadder, Laird of Kimmerghame, 1697-1699. Isobel Home's letters pay particular attention to purchasing linen, flour and general provisions as well as procuring good wine and medicine.

⁶² Stanhope, *Memoir*; pp. 60-73.

preserve the Dundonald inheritance until he came of age.⁶³ Tutors had been appointed for the young man including his uncle, Lady Dundonald's brother, the Earl of Arran, later fourth duke of Hamilton. Her letters to him, and other family members, outline the difficulties she faced in maintaining control of her son's affairs. Matters concerning property, education and the Dundonald farming and agricultural interests were all issues which she discussed with her brother.⁶⁴ Her son's health was another concern and in this, as with his financial business, Lady Dundonald proved herself to be strong willed and adept at securing what she believed was in her son's best interests. She did not remarry immediately but waited until her sons were older and in doing so she, like other widows, did not complicate their sons' inheritance or, more crucially, lessen female control over their affairs by remarriage.⁶⁵

Lady Margaret Hope, daughter of the fourth earl of Haddington and widow of the enterprising John Hope of Hopetoun, managed his business after his death in 1682 and secured the future of her son, Charles.⁶⁶ During his minority the lead mines which her husband had inherited flourished under her supervision and, added to income from the estate, her son was a wealthy man when he came of age. In 1692 she fought against taxes being levied against her ore production and exporting business at Leith and successfully won the case on her son's behalf as the local council, 'noted the

⁶³ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, III, pp. 352-353.

⁶⁴ NAS GD406/1/9101 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran, [Edinburgh] 7 March 1694; NAS GD406/1/9099 Susan, Countess of Dundonald to Earl of Arran, [?] 3 June 1694; NAS GD406/1/7364 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, Edinburgh to Earl of Arran, October 1694; NAS GD406/1/7367 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran, [Edinburgh] 27 November 1694; NAS GD406/1/7470 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran, [Edinburgh] 22 February 1695. Similarly Henrietta Erskine relied on the help and advice of her relative the Earl of Mar concerning the financial and legal implications of her son's marriage negotiations, NAS GD124/15/218 2 letters from Henrietta Erskine to Earl of Mar, [Edinburgh] 6-10 January 1702. Although many letters to Mar requested favours due to his status as Secretary of State the reliance of related women would have been similar in other families.

⁶⁵ *The Scots Peerage* states Lady Dundonald married Charles Hay, third marquis of Tweeddale in 1692-4 but she actually married him in 1697, seven years after the death of her first husband, see Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VII p.462 and Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p.148. In contrast Lord Strathmore's mother is recorded as having married for a second time, when her son was only eight, to the Earl of Linlithgow who, 'treated his stepson with cruelty and extortion', see A. H. Millar, *Glamis Book of Record* (Edinburgh, 1890), p. xiv.

⁶⁶ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, IV, p. 493.

advantages her business brought to the area'.⁶⁷ Her actions prove that a widow could capitalise on the freedom her status provided as this allowed her to involve herself to the fullest degree in business matters and the running of an estate.

Giving that estate over once it had been built up could prove more difficult as relinquishing these responsibilities after years of business could be hard for noblewomen who were accustomed to full control. Upon marriage a wife's property would normally become her husband's although it was his duty to preserve this and not to sell property or moveables without her consent. Most marriages allowed wives the freedom to make independent domestic purchases and financial transactions within reason for convenience sake.⁶⁸ Duchess Anne, as duchess in her own right, had a legal document drawn up which allowed her to act independently from her husband although it is acknowledged that theirs was a joint effort in re-establishing the Hamilton fortunes.⁶⁹ However, after the Duke's death in 1694 Duchess Anne did not immediately hand over control of the estates to her son and heir, in fact she only relinquished the title in his favour.⁷⁰ Duchess Anne was a woman with astute financial judgment. Her eldest son did not inherit her talent for managing money and she feared that handing over the estate to him would ruin what she had so carefully built up over many years.

Widows were not the only ones who could seize the opportunity to manage the estate or be forced into undertaking the administration of family affairs. The wives of Jacobite nobles also present a more independent female management figure especially if their husbands went into exile and they remained in Scotland. Lady Panmure was a Jacobite wife who coped admirably in the absence of her husband and proved herself to

⁶⁷ Kelsall, *Scottish Lifestyle*, pp. 90-91. The 'local council' is not specified but as Charles Hope of Hopetoun represented Linlithgow in 1703 this would be the families locality, see Young, *Parliaments of Scotland, I*, p.359.

⁶⁸ Walker, *A Legal History of Scotland*, p. 655; R. A. Houston, 'Women in the Economy and Society of Scotland, 1500-1800', in Houston and Whyte, *Scottish Society*, pp. 118-147.

⁶⁹ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp.195-7.

⁷⁰ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p. 216.

be a competent estate manager.⁷¹ Not only did she ensure that the estates were not completely sacrificed, she coped with the limited resources available to keep them running as well as campaigning to have her husband pardoned.⁷² Not all Jacobite wives reacted well to the change in their position. Some found the shock of the rebellion and the subsequent pressure to manage affairs was too much to bear and were noted to have endured a period of 'decline' or ill health.⁷³ Others, like Lady Panmure, acknowledged the blow of this drastic change of circumstances but made a conscious decision to face the future and make the best of it. Lady Nairne was of a similar personality and when her husband was held in London on charges relating to Jacobitism in 1708 she travelled there to do her best to secure his release.⁷⁴ The correspondence of these two noblewomen illustrates their fortitude and also highlights the financial difficulties they faced long before the rebellion. Those men with a strong Jacobite allegiance often failed to take their place in parliament and found little favour with the reigning monarch so the financial benefits of office were denied them. Adherence to a different political outlook impacted on wives especially if noblemen went into exile. This was quite a different experience from widows as Jacobite wives faced a loss of reputation, and possibly family support, as well as the threat to their titles and estates. Like the wives of nobles in exile before the Revolution of 1688 these women managed their families on limited resources, clinging to a belief in their status and remained hopeful their luck would change. Like other noblewomen, however, Jacobite wives as managers can also be seen to inhabit a space which stretches our perception of the 'domestic'. They were engaged in sole management of household and estate, legal business and finance and yet they appear to have been tolerated in this role and recognised as in charge. They

⁷¹ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VII, pp. 24-27.

⁷² Szechi, 1715, p. 223.

⁷³ Szechi, 1715, p. 223.

⁷⁴ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, pp. 394-395.

acted independently and acknowledging this female role stretches the boundaries and constraints that have relegated noblewomen to the domestic which has concealed the reality of their lives.

Property and Furthering Family Interest

As well as understanding how and where noblewomen managed and were effective in business it is important to note who was influenced by their skills and activities. Anne, Lady Blantyre wrote to her son in 1708 to draw his attention to business which she felt he was neglecting and encouraged him to purchase land which, ‘borders with your own interests’, and was, in her opinion, ‘worth more to you than any in Scotland’.⁷⁵ The Dowager Countess of Montrose also wrote to her son, the fourth Marquis, to give her opinion on the purchase of land. She acknowledged that he had ‘payed much’ but conceded that while it may, ‘locke strang to be borrowing so much munay’, the opportunity to purchase was too good to miss.⁷⁶ The Dowager hoped her son had, ‘considered all the advantages & inconveniences of itt’, but expressed the judgment that, ‘god himself [would] geve you that desirable ritches which is ritcheousness’.⁷⁷ Despite her religious views she encouraged her son in his worldly endeavours to improve his position. As she had obviously considered all the advantages of the deal she had to concede that borrowing was necessary to achieve this end.

Borrowing and advancing money to family members and kin was another activity noblewomen undertook and this does not appear to have been criticised or seen as an activity outwith noblewomen’s remit. The Dowager Lady Nairne (d. 1704) resisted

⁷⁵ NAS GD406/1/11175 Anne, Lady Blantyre, to Lord Blantyre, [Glasgow] 11 February 1708.

⁷⁶ NAS GD220/5/78/2 Christian, Dowager Marchioness of Montrose, to Marquis of Montrose, [Kinross] 19-27 June 1704.

⁷⁷ NAS GD220/5/78/2 Christian, Dowager Marchioness of Montrose, to Marquis of Montrose, [Kinross] 19-27 June 1704.

attempts by the Marquis of Atholl to borrow money from her in 1699 by assuring him she had none available as it, 'lyes in the famillie and my grandchildrens names are in the bonds'.⁷⁸ She used this opportunity not only to rebuff his request for money but also to remind him that he himself still owed her rent. He apologised for the oversight and she appeased him by claiming she 'bragged' that his was, 'the best payed annual rent I have', and he need only pay at his own convenience.⁷⁹ Lady Nairne did not advance the Marquis money and it is not clear how promptly he paid his debt. What is clear is that she dealt decisively with the matter while maintaining a suitably deferential manner and so remained on good terms with her daughter's father-in-law.

As well as managing the estate and involving themselves in the significant issues of leasing and acquiring land, noblewomen also undertook the supervision of building and improvement to property. Duchess Anne rebuilt the family home and areas surrounding Hamilton and also instigated building on the island of Arran.⁸⁰ Her particular intention there was to provide schooling for the children, and more importantly for her, to provide a church and minister for her tenants.⁸¹ Her area of influence and authority in this instance stretched well beyond her own home and estate. As well as ensuring the fabric of the church some noble families were also responsible for paying ministers. Lothian sent his regards to their local minister and reminded his wife in 1696 to, 'have a

⁷⁸ Blair MS 45.(1).40 Margaret, Dowager Lady Nairne, to Marquis of Atholl, [Nairne] 29 September 1699.

⁷⁹ Blair MS 45.(1).40 Margaret, Dowager Lady Nairne, to Marquis of Atholl, [Nairne] 29 September 1699.

⁸⁰ Duchess Anne also managed a long term property issue relating to the family claims to the 'ancient Dutchie' of Chatelherault, see Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, pp. 170-171 and also NAS GD406/1/8417 Earl of Lauderdale to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton asking her to send to France on the business of Chatelherault, [Ham] 4 October 1670; NAS GD406/1/2663, Basil, Earl of Denbigh to his niece Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, claiming it was a suitable time to renew her claim to Chatelherault, [Newham] 17 March 1672. The Earl of Arran wrote to his mother in 1697 justifying a trip to France by suggesting he could press the family claim, NAS GD406/1/11798 Earl of Arran to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, and [London] 2 November 1697. The Earl of Abercorn made a counter claim which Duchess Anne also had to deal with, NAS GD406/1/10375 Duke of Hamilton to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, [London] 2 October 1712 and NAS GD406/1/8135 Earl of Selkirk to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, [?] [n.d.] December 1712.

⁸¹ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p. 226.

care his stipend we pay be done and comfortable to him as may be...'⁸² The letter indicates that this duty, if it fell to a noble family, was yet another task that noblewomen had to supervise in the absence of men. Despite having no formal role within the Church this was not a barrier to noblewomen who involved themselves in aspects of Church life such as support for ministers, poor relief or even building within the parish. This activity was shared with husbands and women appear to have been highly regarded for it and not perceived as interfering in areas outwith their knowledge or expertise.

Noblewomen supervised the maintenance of the family home and letters between couples lend an insight into how much construction work was overseen by women. Lady Nairne wrote to Lady Panmure in 1709 and discussed the plans and building of her new home. She wrote that her husband was travelling over forty miles to, 'cut the great timbers', required although transporting them was 'terrible work'.⁸³ The state of some noble residences could leave a lot to be desired with the Marchioness of Atholl complaining in 1701 that 'great raines' at Blair meant it rained 'almost as fast' indoors as out.⁸⁴ Lothian benefited from his travels by developing a progressive perspective on building concluding in one letter that those 'bred abroad' had a 'great advantage' for, 'we are so rustic att home'.⁸⁵ Subsequent letters suggest his dissatisfaction with his existing home and his intention to pull it down as, 'when I see houses heir it seems a scandalous thing to keep that rotten thing upp'.⁸⁶ However it was Lothian's wife who was trusted to oversee all the work that was necessary and he applauded her efforts by

⁸² NAS GD40/2/8/104 Lothian to Anne, Lady Lothian, [London] 12 January 1696. James Hamilton of Pentcaitland wrote to the Earl of Arran wondering how Duchess Anne was going to provide a stipend for a second minister at Hamilton, see NAS GD406/1/6685 James Hamilton to Earl of Arran, [Edinburgh] 16 March 1695.

⁸³ NAS GD45/14/245/18 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 25 July 1709.

⁸⁴ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 486.

⁸⁵ NAS GD40/2/8/50 Lothian to Anne, Lady Lothian, [London] 7 August 1693.

⁸⁶ NAS GD40/2/8/53 Lothian to Anne, Lady Lothian, [Bath] 16 August 1693.

writing that, ‘you must stil have the fortune of ladys of our house to be the bilder’.⁸⁷ It is not clear whether Lady Lothian had much choice in assuming the role of builder but given that her husband was pleased with the results suggests she was equal to the task. His comment strengthens the idea that women had long had management of this kind within the Lothian family and she was not unusual in engaging with this kind of project.

These examples demonstrate that female management encompassed everything from the mundane and domestic to finance and property matters, all of which impacted on the family’s ability to expand and prosper, to acquire wealth and to command power. Revealing the level of management activity that noblewomen could develop suggests that men regarded their wives’ skills as valuable and highly necessary to family interest and their personal careers. Men relied on women in the family to take on these tasks to allow them to concentrate on more formal roles and this suggests an idea that noblewomen moved easily in all areas of business which have generally been regarded as exclusively male. Noblewomen tackled these issues as a part of their everyday life but sometimes their management skills were tested to the limit as difficulties presented themselves which no one could have prepared them for.

Crisis Management.

Union historiography has been divided over the importance of the economic situation of the years preceding 1707. The once strongly supported view that Scots sacrificed parliamentary independence for free trade has ‘been condemned’. Likewise, the argument suggesting trade had no part in influencing union because economic benefits

⁸⁷ NAS GD40/2/8/101 Lothian to Anne, Lady Lothian, [London] 10 December 1698.

failed to materialise after 1707 has been dismissed as a ‘red herring’.⁸⁸ The concern for Scotland’s ‘material condition’ at that time is not in doubt.⁸⁹ An important part of exploring and understanding the management capabilities of noblewomen lies in determining their perception of the economic situation prior to union. The late 1690’s was a period of severe weather, a mini ice age, which brought unseasonably cold weather resulting in poor harvests, shortage of food and in some places famine and death from related illness and disease.⁹⁰ Coupled with trade restrictions, the cost of the Nine Years War and the failed venture of the Company of Scotland to establish a colony in Central America, Scotland was in a perilous state.⁹¹ Noblewomen understood this as well as anyone and they reacted to circumstances while developing their own opinions and political point of view regarding the state of the country.

The ‘ill years’ of King William’s reign have been given the biblical proportions of a disaster lasting seven years but it has recently been proposed that the reality was probably around five years of severe conditions from about 1695.⁹² The letter from factor James Murray to Lady Katherine in 1696 described how he found tenants without the means to pay their rents as, ‘they are far behind with buying their summer meal or else I would have been cleared of all they are resting [owing]’.⁹³ He noted that some were still due payment for the years 1692 and 1693 and Murray was convinced, ‘there will be noe money got til the mercats’, so he was not hopeful of either cash or payment in kind.⁹⁴ Lady Katherine’s brother, Lord Basil, wrote to her in June of 1696 reporting on the ‘sad condition’ of the country and that both he and Duchess Anne expected no

⁸⁸ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 42-43.

⁸⁹ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 42-43.

⁹⁰ Cullen, *Famine in Scotland*, pp. 1-9.

⁹¹ Cullen, *Famine in Scotland*, pp. 14-27.

⁹² Cullen, *Famine in Scotland*, p. 14.

⁹³ Blair MS 29.I.(8).17 James Murray, Factor to Katherine, Lady Murray [Tullibardine] 13 January 1693.

⁹⁴ Blair MS 29.I.(8).17 James Murray, Factor to Katherine, Lady Murray, [Tullibardine] 13 January 1693

payments of rents.⁹⁵ He commented on the high price of meal and that country people were already starving yet, ‘great hardship was ahead before the harvest’. This also impacted on Duchess Anne’s building plans as with no rents coming in she could not meet the construction costs. Salvaging what had been built was considered too hazardous a job so Lord Basil believed they would have to, ‘pull down the house’.⁹⁶ He commented gloomily on, ‘the strangest, cold unnatural weather that ever was seen’, and deemed the whole situation ‘judgment like’.⁹⁷ Lady Dundonald wrote with similar expressions describing the whole country as being in a, ‘sad condition for scarcity of corne and money’.⁹⁸ Lady Katherine wrote to Lady Orkney in September of 1696 commenting on terrible weather ruining the harvest convinced that, ‘we shall have down right famine’.⁹⁹ Lady Katherine however, differed in the response of her husband to this crisis. She wrote to him that although he had ordered not to lift the rents she still thought, ‘it better to take what there is yn let it ly in ye chamberlains hands’.¹⁰⁰ This was probably suggested as a matter of security rather than an attempt to demand payment regardless of tenants’ ability to do so. There is no reason to suggest that Lady Katherine did not trust the chamberlain in this matter although she regularly checked his accounting.¹⁰¹ It is not clear if she was successful in getting her way in this matter but she gave her opinion as Tullibardine was absent.

Difficulty in collecting rents was a common problem and one of the reasons the Dowager Lady Nairne used when refusing the Marquis a loan. Like Atholl she too had

⁹⁵ Blair MS 29.I.(8).227 Lord Basil to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Hamilton] 6 June 1696.

⁹⁶ Blair MS 29.I.(8).227 Lord Basil to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Hamilton] 6 June 1696.

⁹⁷ Blair MS 29.I.(8).227 Lord Basil to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Hamilton] 6 June 1696.

⁹⁸ NAS GD406/1/6388 Susan, Countess of Dundonald to Earl of Arran, [Edinburgh] 2 January 1697.

⁹⁹ Blair MS 29.I.(10).208 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Elizabeth, Countess of Orkney, [?] 13 September 1696.

¹⁰⁰ Blair MS 29.I.(8).377 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Belford] 17 December 1696.

¹⁰¹ Leneman notes the inefficiency of some factors and the difficulties of managing this, see Leneman, *Atholl*, p. 20. In 1696 Lady Nairne wrote to Tullibardine to report that she and Lady Panmure had been asked to check the accounts, which they had, as Lady Katherine was ill, Blair MS 29.I.(8).357 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Earl of Tullibardine, [Belford] 26 October 1696.

financial troubles and referred to herself as in 'straitened' circumstances.¹⁰² However, another important reason that the Dowager gave for having no money to hand was that she was, 'to pay a part of that I have in to the Affrica Company'.¹⁰³ Noblewomen were free to invest in the Company of Scotland and shared the excitement of being part of Scotland's plan to found a colony at Darien on the Isthmus of Panama.¹⁰⁴ The dream that Scotland might, 'command a great commercial empire', with the colony allowing a link to Japan, China and the Indies tempted many investors but their motivations were diverse.¹⁰⁵ Lord Basil thought his mother, Duchess Anne, should invest more than £1000, 'as an example to other persons of quality', although she initially thought this amount unnecessary.¹⁰⁶ She must have been persuaded otherwise as she invested £3000 in total and was the first to sign the subscription book when it opened.¹⁰⁷ Lady Panmure was particularly interested in the scheme and her husband was a director and shareholder.¹⁰⁸ As her sister, Lady Dundonald, and their brothers, also invested this meant a significant amount of Hamilton family money was committed.¹⁰⁹ Lady Panmure wrote to Lady Katherine about meetings of the 'African Company' stating that, 'all scotts folks should stand up for it', and that if they did, 'the english would not be so well able to obstruct it'.¹¹⁰ She wrote again in 1698 announcing how involved in the company her husband was although she was still convinced that not enough Scots,

¹⁰² Noblewomen were not averse to claiming their circumstances were dire to elicit help and this will be discussed further in the chapter on patronage. Robina, Countess of Forfar claimed at the end of the 1690s she had, 'little to live on', in a bid to secure financial and legal support from the Earl of Arran, NAS GD406/1/4208, Robina Countess of Forfar to Earl of Arran, [?] 15 October 1697.

¹⁰³ Blair MS 45.(1).40 Margaret, Dowager Lady Nairne to Marquis of Atholl, [Nairne] 29 September 1699.

¹⁰⁴ Watt, *The Price of Scotland*.

¹⁰⁵ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 166-167.

¹⁰⁶ NAS GD406/1/6944 Lord Basil to Earl of Arran, [Holyroodhouse] 25 February 1696.

¹⁰⁷ Watt, *Price of Scotland*, p.58.

¹⁰⁸ Watt, *Price of Scotland*, p.66.

¹⁰⁹ J. H. Burton, *The Darien Papers* (Edinburgh, 1849); Watt, *Price of Scotland*, pp. 271-273.

¹¹⁰ Blair MS 29.I.(9).452 Margaret, Countess of Panmure to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Edinburgh] 25 November 1697. Watt outlines the attempts of Scots to raise money for the scheme in London and English opposition to it, Watt, *Price of Scotland*, pp. 31-46.

‘concerns themselves about it’.¹¹¹ The Marquis of Atholl had invested but whether Lady Panmure was attempting to persuade her sister-in-law to subscribe is not clear. It is interesting to note that the first five subscribers were noblewomen investing for themselves and on behalf of their sons.¹¹² Whether this was because it was considered patriotic to do so or just financially beneficial or because Duchess Anne had indeed set an example which was followed by others is unclear. Although noblewomen subscribed to the scheme many other women also invested. Ninety one women of varying status provided £21,000 or 5.3 per cent of the capital.¹¹³ Once more we find women participating in an area which did not allow for their full inclusion. Their actions show concern for the economic prospects of the country, their patriotism and their awareness of the poor trade prospects of Scotland which were of huge concern within the union debates. Their support for Darien can be viewed in two ways. It could have been a rewarding speculation made by women of independent means which ended, as such investments often do, without return. It can also be seen as an opportunity for women to gain a political voice. Was their publicly proclaimed subscription and investment a means of protesting against the injustice of trading restrictions imposed by England?

The 1690’s brought further ills. The previously mentioned domestic issues of noblewomen discussing the purchase and prices of linen become more significant when we understand the economic situation. Mar wrote to Lady Mar informing her of the parliamentary debates on trade restrictions and export regulations especially mentioning

¹¹¹ Blair MS 29.I.(10).141 Margaret, Countess of Panmure to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Edinburgh] 7 April 1698.

¹¹² Burton, *Darien Papers*; Watt, *Price of Scotland*, p. 271. Watt acknowledges women investing in the Darien venture and other female investment has been the subject of work on English noblewomen, particularly their investment in the South Sea Company although the significance of the much earlier female investment in Darien has been not been fully recognised, see O’Day, *Chandos*; A. Lawrence, ‘Women investors, ‘that nasty South Sea affair’ and the rage to speculate in early eighteenth-century England’, *Accounting, Business and Financial History* 16 (2), (2006), pp. 245-264.

¹¹³ Watt, *Price of Scotland*, p. 58.

the linen trade and the proposed ban on importing Irish butter and cheese.¹¹⁴ Lord Basil and Lady Katherine both involved themselves in advising their brother, Hamilton, about the, ‘unreasonable proposal for laying cess on coal and salt’.¹¹⁵ Lady Katherine gave her opinion but was also concerned with negotiations about their lead mines at Glenlyon because a lack of capital and parliament being so ‘uncertain’ meant the family could not proceed.¹¹⁶ Taxation and trade restrictions added to the lack of money and the non payments of rents continued to be a problem. The poor themselves were becoming a political issue and also the concern of noblewomen.

Lady Katherine wrote to her brother that, ‘the cryes of the poor [were] dayly increasing’, with the rising price of corn and that there was, ‘nothing being don for them ...who are swarming up and down’.¹¹⁷ Lady Katherine’s anger was inflamed as she claimed Atholl had drawn up an act in favour of doing something about it but that, ‘the commissioner would not hear of it’. She also expressed outrage that the, ‘two years Poll that is imposed was pretended ...to be for y the payments to the disbanded officers’, but they had not had, ‘one grote of it and many of them starving’.¹¹⁸ Her concern for the poor was not just an understandable reaction to obvious suffering. Tullibardine had recently been forced to resign from his position as Secretary of State and felt highly aggrieved at his treatment by those still in power.¹¹⁹ Lady Katherine used the legitimate concerns of a noblewoman, in this case the welfare of the poor, as an opportunity to

¹¹⁴ NAS GD124/15/231/15 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, August 1705; NAS GD124/15/231/16 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess Mar, September 1705.

¹¹⁵ NAS GD406/1/7466 Lord Basil to Earl of Arran, [Hamilton] 13 May 1695; NAS GD406/1/6639 Katherine, Lady Murray to Earl of Arran, [Hamilton] 13 August 1695.

¹¹⁶ Blair MS 29.I.(10).208 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Orkney [?] 13 September 1698.

¹¹⁷ Blair MS 29.I.(9).24 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Holyroodhouse] 23 December 1696.

¹¹⁸ Blair MS 29.I.(9).24 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Holyroodhouse] 23 December 1696.

¹¹⁹ Derek Patrick sets out in detail the issues which led to Tullibardine resigning his post which concerned securing the appointment of Sir William Hamilton of Whitelaw as president of session and Tullibardine’s issues with the Earl of Marchmont over this, see D. J. Patrick, ‘People and Parliament in Scotland 1689-1702’, unpublished PhD Thesis (St Andrews, 2002), pp. 195-201. Tullibardine believed Marchmont had gained his position as Chancellor of Scotland through his intervention and that Marchmont had wronged him in this matter, see Atholl, *Chronicles, I*, p. 457.

inform others of her husband's political actions both to bolster his reputation after the humiliation of losing his post and to discredit those who remained.

Like other noblewomen, Lady Katherine had also benefitted from her husband's period in office and she clearly felt the loss for the family. Issues over money and the exchange rate between Scotland and England demonstrate her particular involvement in his career as well as his business. In 1696 her husband, on his journey south, had instructed her to, 'buy up English money', although Scots money, 'passes better than English [as far as] Newcastle.'¹²⁰ The exchange rate troubled Tullibardine who knew he would have to borrow to manage his lifestyle and, 'live as a Scots Secretar ought to do'.¹²¹ English money was being devalued and in January of 1697 Lady Katherine, resident in apartments at Holyrood while her husband was in London, wrote to him on the matter.¹²² She believed it was, 'a shame to hear how oft our mony is cryd up and down but however it is better yn to have all ye clipped [devalued] English mony to pass as currant'.¹²³ The Chancellor had approached Lady Katherine to ascertain her husband's opinion, 'in making the clipped mony currant here', and she told him, 'very plainly I was confident you would be against it'.¹²⁴ She had apparently taken the opportunity not only to convey her husband's opinion but readily gave her own suggesting that 'rationall persons' could not support the idea as England would, 'turne all there base mony doun upon us', and, 'take away ours which passes for more.'¹²⁵ Her

¹²⁰ Blair MS 29.I.(8).18 Lord Murray to Katherine, Lady Murray, [London] 18 January 1696.

¹²¹ Blair MS 29.I.(8).18 Lord Murray to Katherine, Lady Murray, [London] 18 January 1696.

¹²² The financial situation in Scotland was exacerbated by war and the subsequent loss of French and Baltic trade as well as famine impacting on grain markets. By 1705 only one-sixth of the coin minted in Scotland since 1686 was still in the country and until 1707 shortage of specie was one of the most commonly heard complaints by consumers and sellers in Scotland, see Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp.140, 149 and 160.

¹²³ Blair MS 29.I.(9).24 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Holyroodhouse] 23 January 1697.

¹²⁴ Blair MS 29.I.(9).24 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Holyroodhouse] 23 January 1697.

¹²⁵ Blair MS 29.I.(9).24 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Holyroodhouse] 23 January 1697.

assessment of the financial situation is probably unremarkable as any noblewoman with business interests would be aware of these developments. What is interesting was how she used her position to stress the opinion she shared with her husband and how the Chancellor actively sought her view. At this point Lady Katherine was also in the position of a political player. She too was absent from the family estate. Instead of managing estate business at this time she had to take up an even more important role as trusted advisor to her husband. Using her knowledge and ability to stay ahead of events in Edinburgh she reliably informed Tullibardine in London. Her letter was not asking him what she should say but reporting what had already passed as the issue had gone before parliament the previous day. Lady Katherine clearly had the freedom, ability and autonomy to express her political views as readily as she made the transition from management responsibilities to political ones.

Noblewomen who engaged in estate management and business affairs continued to be affected by the economic issues surrounding Union up to and beyond the event. In 1702 Lady Seafield wrote to her chamberlain with instructions on ‘bier and meal’ that was being shipped and sold, commenting on both the quality and price as well as giving him instructions to send money south to pay creditors.¹²⁶ Lady Blantyre wrote to her son discussing his financial and estate business at length and informing him that, ‘neither beir nor meal can be sold’, which she cynically referred to as, ‘one of the happy consequents of our glorious union’.¹²⁷ Lady Nairne commented in 1708 on the scarcity of money and that, ‘all is paper credit [here] and a stop put to that would ruin thousands’.¹²⁸ Noblewomen, like noblemen, understood and reacted to the economic pressures everyone faced when maintaining estates.

¹²⁶ Grant, *Seafield Correspondence*, pp. 353

¹²⁷ NAS GD406/1/11174 Anne, Lady Blantyre to Lord Blantyre, [Crekin?] 18 August 1707.

¹²⁸ NAS GD45/14/245/12 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [Nairne] 15 May 1708.

Exile, widowhood and the absence of husbands could be seen as calamitous for a noble family but in many instances noblewomen used this change in fortune as an opportunity to embrace a role they may never have imagined would be solely theirs. Sharing the management of the family interest and dealing with estate issues while a husband was merely absent for a limited period or indisposed for a time was something noble wives would have expected. Actually taking on the entire task was always a possibility but it demonstrates how some noblewomen could involve themselves in both legal and financial business without provoking adverse criticism. In managing estates noblewomen were in charge of, not just a family home, but, 'a centre of employment and enterprise and so also political patronage and influence', and as such a wife was, 'automatically a political figure'.¹²⁹ Considering how equally well informed women were over the same business concerns as men suggests that economic issues, and the related political implications, affected noblewomen's decisions in much the same way as men. However, revealing noblewomen's understanding of these issues is complicated by the need for noblewomen to use more subtle means to avoid upsetting the patriarchal balance and not exceed the boundaries of female involvement. The task of uncovering their personal political thoughts and motivations requires a far more nuanced examination of the sources.

Uncovering the role of noblewomen in relation to family property highlights the symbiotic relationship of land, wealth and power. Noble wives and mothers encouraged borrowing, purchasing, building and improvement - proof of their grasp of finance as well as their role in management. Noblewomen were aware of their own worth in terms of money or property but this does not appear to be understood as a personal right but more as a bargaining tool to secure the future for herself and her children. Why should

¹²⁹ Lukowski, *European Nobility*, p. 179.

women improve buildings, provide for tenants and help increase the estate if they could not legally have possession of it? For the same reason they sought patronage without being able to hold office and for the same reason they engaged with politics without a formal mandate. This reason allowed noblewomen to create a variety of roles for themselves which men understood as imperative for their joint success and the continuation of their noble line: family interest. The relationship between land, wealth and power can no longer be seen in terms of male pre-eminence. Women had a significant part to play within this relationship and uncovering this crucial role is key when redefining female political activity.

Chapter 5

Social Politics And Patronage

Social politics can be defined as, ‘the management of people and social situations for political ends’, and while most historians accept that there has always been, ‘an interweaving of society and politics’, our understanding of women and politics has suffered from the assertion that ‘real’ political activity can only occur in parliament.¹ Placing formal parliamentary activity at, ‘the top of a hierarchy of political venues’, correctly suggests that government and acts of governance were undoubtedly male but there was scope for involvement for those outwith these parameters, both male and female, within an informal, social arena.² This social arena has been identified for English women in the eighteenth by Elaine Chalus and she refers to society as, ‘an extra-parliamentary stage upon which both small and large scale political dramas could be enacted’.³ Scottish noblewomen in the pre Union period may not have enjoyed the same level of sociability as their later, English counterparts but the argument that Scottish politics also had a social element and that noblewomen were a part of that arena is compelling.⁴

This chapter will explore Scottish noblewomen’s role in social politics by examining the more subtle aspects of female political involvement and revealing their

¹ Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 77-78.

² Chalus, *Political Life*, p. 78.

³ Chalus, *Political Life*, p. 77.

⁴ Brown, *Noble Society*, pp. 1-25; Brown, *Noble Power*, p. 250; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 28.

patronage activity. This includes identifying when and how Scottish noblewomen appealed for support and help from family members and also sought favours from distant relatives or well positioned individuals. This demonstrates what was expected of wives and illustrates aspects of their knowledge as well as their ability to act independently and within social boundaries. Noblewomen who engaged in more overt political behaviour, including the dissemination of political news and the creation of political patronage networks, will be dealt with in a further chapter although some overlap does occur.

It is almost impossible to deal separately with politics and patronage. Mitchison sets out the model of government being adopted in Scotland in the early eighteenth century and defined the whole system as being bound by, 'common assumptions, patronage and the use of influence.'⁵ Examining government and the Scottish highlands she emphasizes the importance of patronage in relation to how clans operated but her argument is equally valid for noble families. Family networks were vital to women requesting favours, positions or securing pensions and all forms of patronage were invariably associated.⁶ Patronage was sought when securing a position or pension but the motivations behind who was approached and what benefits or incentives were used often had a political basis.

A noble patron was one that would cultivate connections with those of lesser status securing social and professional opportunities for them in return for loyalty and support. This was a reciprocal arrangement, nurtured and carefully maintained with all manner

⁵ R. Mitchison, 'The Government and the Highlands', in Phillipson and Mitchison, *Age of Improvement*, pp. 24-46.

⁶ Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 3-4; Simpson asks if there are any political questions other than questions of patronage, see J. M. Simpson, 'Who Steered the Gravy Train, 1707-1766?' in Phillipson and Mitchison, *Age of Improvement*, pp. 47-72.

of favours being bestowed by a patron on his clients in return for their allegiance.⁷ In eighteenth century English politics patronage is described as a major tool of political management and also a means of recruitment and advancement for others. Political patronage was only one part of a wider phenomenon which pervaded the domestic, cultural and social domains. Personal contacts and networks between friends and relatives were crucial and often formed the basis for political affiliations.⁸ Patronage in the eighteenth century has tended to be viewed as a 'male stronghold' because the perceived social and legal constraints of the period have led to an assumption that women could not have exercised patronage.⁹ However, Chalus has explored various mitigating factors which support the inclusion of women. She demonstrates that the absence of husbands through military duty, the need for widows to protect a son's inheritance and broader family interests all motivated women to seek patronage. Chalus shows that noblewomen who brought property, wealth or titles to their marriages could also formally or informally maintain some level of control over these interests and could, in fact, be benefactors themselves.¹⁰ Recent work reveals noblewomen sought patronage in much the same way as their male counterparts, challenging the perceived 'invisibility' of women by acknowledging their engagement with this activity.¹¹ Early modern English noblewomen used complex networks and expanded their social activities to extend their abilities and influence over time so that by c.1750 they played

⁷ H. M. Scott and C. D. Storrs, 'The Consolidation of Noble Power in Europe, c.1600-1800', in Scott, *European Nobilities*, p. 24; Dewald, *European Nobility*, pp. 42-43; Asch, *Nobilities in Transition*, pp. 40-44.

⁸ Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 105-157; G. Holmes, *Politics in the Age of Anne*, pp. 46-52.

⁹ Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 106-121.

¹⁰ Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 106-121.

¹¹ Chalus cites the work of other historians to reinforce her argument including L. Levy Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England* (London, 1990) and also B. J. Harris, 'Women in Politics in Early Tudor England', *Historical Journal*, 33, (1990), pp. 259-281 in Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 107-111. See also J. Eales, *Puritans and Roundheads* (Glasgow, 2002) and J. Eales, *Women in Early Modern England 1500-1700* (London, 1998).

an important role in political patronage.¹² However, these findings stem from research on English politics in the period c.1740-1800 and do not include or examine Scottish noblewomen.

The ability of noblewomen in the period from the Revolution of 1688 to Union in 1707 to utilise their connections in order to make requests for pensions, preferment and positions has been all but ignored within Scottish historiography.¹³ This period yields no extensive studies on Scottish noblewomen's activities in regard to their understanding and use of patronage in the way similar work has illuminated the lives of English and European noblewomen.¹⁴ Exploring noblewomen's involvement in patronage and the networks they developed can reveal the broader structure and framework of political alliances. Understanding the efforts some noblewomen made to promote male careers, further family interest and secure money through patronage reveals differing levels of female ability and engagement. These highlight crucial distinctions in noblewomen's knowledge and involvement which in turn suggest various conclusions on female autonomy and influence.

English and European noblewomen who were actively participating in a patronage system were using connections with family and friends in an effort to gain some tangible reward be it preferment, money, position or votes. The intangible benefits included good-will, enhanced reputation, honour and promises of support or loyalty. Chalus argues that patronage was informal but binding and that it was also both

¹² Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 111-113.

¹³ Ferguson, *Scotland's Relations with England*; Riley, *Union*; Whatley, *Scots and Union*; Watt, *Price of Scotland*; Bowie, *Scottish Public Opinion* all pay little attention to the role of noblewomen but some make brief mention of marriage, alliance and patronage. Some work does acknowledge female patronage but does not constitute an extensive study nor is it solely related to the period 1688-1707 e.g. Brown, *Noble Society*; Leneman, *Atholl*; Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*; Nenadic, *Lairds and Luxury*; von den Steinen, 'Women's Political Activism', pp.112-122; Innes and Rendall, 'Women, Gender and Politics', in Abrams, Gordon, Simonton and Yeo, *Gender in Scottish History*, pp.??

¹⁴ Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 1-27; Eales, *Women in Early Modern England*; Kettering, 'Patronage Power', pp. 817-841; Chapman, 'Patronage as Family Economy', pp. 11-35; Hanley, 'Engendering the State', pp. 4-27; Dewald, *European Nobility*, Fairchilds, *Women in Early Modern Europe*; Lukowski, *Nobility*.

public and private. This means that those arrangements which were agreed unofficially and in private would reflect a level of obligation, the effects of which, could be publicly recognised. The patronage system was particularly suited to women of the political elite as it connected social and electoral politics and provided women in the mid eighteenth century with an important way of participating in political life. Chalus recognises the link connecting ‘formal and informal’ politics, and highlights women operating effectively between the political and social arenas.¹⁵ Exploring the possibility that Scottish noblewomen created a similar role for themselves suggests that women were engaging in a form of social politics within the revolution to union era.

Women and isolation: does distance matter?

Scottish nobles in this period, and in particular noble wives, were often removed geographically from the royal court in London and also from the political centre of Scottish life in Edinburgh.¹⁶ Pursuing a life at court was possible but maintaining a permanent residence in Edinburgh or London as well as running a Scottish estate was not the norm.¹⁷ Examining the opportunities of noblewomen who lived on distant estates to engage in patronage can illuminate their attempts to involve themselves in social politics. One such noblewoman was Margaret, Countess of Mar, wife of John Erskine, sixth earl of Mar. Mar wrote to his wife between 1704 to 1706 on his plans for the future and although he avoided revealing too much in letters he hinted at an imminent change in his fortunes. Mar informed Lady Mar in September of 1705 of the conditions which he understood would allow the passage of the Treaty of Union,

¹⁵ Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 106-113.

¹⁶ Brown, *Noble Society*; Brown, ‘The Scottish Aristocracy, Anglicization and the Court, 1603-38’, *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 36, No.3 (September, 1993), pp. 543-576.

¹⁷ Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos*, pp. 128-129.

stating, 'the house has ordred [the Treaty] shall not commence until the clause in the English act making the Scots Aliens be repealed'.¹⁸ He went on to suggest that, 'if the English will comply with our desire...perhaps a London jurnie will be my fait'.¹⁹ Mar anticipated his wife's reaction to this news by urging her not to, 'vex nor fret your self about it, for if I go, you shall too if you have a mind'.²⁰

This letter suggests several important points in relation to female political activity. The first is that Lady Mar was obviously well informed. Mar related the news without explicit explanations which implies much of this was not new to his wife. Lady Mar, like other noble wives, had an interest in and knowledge of the union negotiations, which is understandable given her husband's career, but this did not necessarily guarantee female interest or involvement. Some noble wives made little reference to politics and as only Mar's letters to his wife survive these are the only evidence that she was at all interested. Her own thoughts or opinions are not clear. Secondly, his references to a 'London jurnie' were vague and could be a means of alluding to forthcoming changes without putting details in writing. This makes it apparent that Lady Mar was again privy to her husband's business and knew the implications. Finally, Mar's soothing tone and reassuring remarks do not imply he was a demanding husband who expected obedience from his wife in response to these changes.

Mar was prominent in politics between 1703 and 1707, despite the Scotch or Queensberry Plot which saw him fall from favour in 1704. In spite of this Mar's power base in Scotland was too strong to be ignored and he was rehabilitated and reappointed as lord privy seal and a lord of the Treasury in 1705.²¹ It is possible to argue that had

¹⁸ NAS GD124/15/231/16 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 7 September 1705.

¹⁹ NAS GD124/15/231/16 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 7 September 1705.

²⁰ NAS GD124/15/231/16 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 7 September 1705.

²¹ C. Ehrenstein, 'Erskine, John, styled twenty-second or sixth earl of Mar and Jacobite duke of Mar (1675-1732)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004); online edn, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8868>, accessed June 2012]

Lady Mar been able to boost his connections, make new alliances or develop existing relationships she may well have found herself more closely involved or at least in residence in Edinburgh with him. A system of patronage was most effective when participants were face to face and many agreements and understandings could be best achieved in person.²² This is another reason why men are seen to dominate patronage as they had more opportunities to meet socially and do business.

At first glance it appears Lady Mar may have been somewhat isolated in Stirling. Mar made constant reassurances to her over his absences which suggest that she was unhappy remaining at home without him. Yet even although distance kept them apart this did not mean she was not useful to him. His letters frequently refer to her being with her family and to visitors she received and entertained when he was absent.²³ In one letter Mar was concerned that while in the company of her relatives Lady Mar may have been indiscreet and he stressed that she should, 'keep this [news] to yourself, else all would be spoilt'.²⁴ What the letters demonstrate is a family network, however removed from Edinburgh, that Lady Mar understood and participated in, hence Mar's concern for her discretion. Acknowledging Lady Mar's involvement, even while removed geographically from Edinburgh, is revealing. It shows that while requests may have been more effectively achieved in person distance was not a barrier, especially for women. These letters suggest that Lady Mar and her husband were in regular contact but news also travelled through a variety of contacts and connections. They do not suggest any overt engagement on Lady Mar's behalf in seeking patronage. There were a few suggestions to contact relatives but no actual requests from Mar to have his wife make specific applications on his behalf. Lady Mar was a friend of Mary, Duchess of

²² Chalus, *Political Life*, p. 112.

²³ NAS GD124/15/231/13 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 23 August 1705; NAS GD124/15/231/11 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 16 July 1705.

²⁴ NAS GD124/15/231/16 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, [Edinburgh] 7 September 1705.

Queensberry (1671-1709) and Mar made references to the couple but again it is not clear whether Lady Mar cultivated this friendship or developed it with her husband's career in mind.²⁵

Katherine, Duchess of Atholl, was another wife who lamented being isolated on some occasions and the amount of her correspondence which has survived is testimony to a husband and wife who often lived apart. When writing to her brother Hamilton in 1704 Lady Katherine apologised for having no news for him as she had, 'nothing to converse with but the roks and mountains'.²⁶ The explanation for her seclusion and the reason many noblewomen endured periodic isolation was pregnancy. Lady Katherine was alone at Blair Atholl waiting to give birth. Travel could be inadvisable for pregnant women and a decision had to be made about where a child would be born so that those wishing to attend the birth could be present. This did not always mean a return to remote estates and over the years Lady Katherine gave birth in Edinburgh as well as at Falkland and Blair but the need to retire from social life is evident.²⁷ The reason that Lady Mar may not have accompanied her husband could also have been related to the birth of her sons. Two boys were born before 1705 so family life could well have precluded her from being with Mar in Edinburgh. Although this limited opportunities to pursue social activities and patronage in person, distance did not discourage noblewomen from writing. In fact the opposite effect of enforced isolation may have been the construction of large networks in a bid to cultivate further written requests for information and patronage among widespread correspondents.

Lady Katherine differed from Lady Mar in that she often accompanied her husband throughout her marriage and this, as well as her higher status as a daughter of

²⁵ Ehrenstein notes the connection but does not refer to evidence of the influence this friendship between the women might have had, Ehrenstein, 'Mar', ODNB.

²⁶ NAS GD406/1/6500 Katherine, Duchess of Atholl to Duke of Hamilton, [Dunkeld] 14 October 1704.

²⁷ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, pp. 267, 268, 275, 331 and 333.

the Hamilton family, gave her more opportunities to engage in patronage. In 1700 a family issue concerning the treatment of the Duke of Atholl's sister at the hands of Simon Fraser of Beaufort prompted Lady Katherine to write to various people to ensure he was brought to justice.²⁸ At the threat of Beaufort securing a pardon she wrote to Anne, Lady Seafield (d.1708) hoping that she would 'desier' her husband Lord Seafield to, 'have no hand in so ill a thing as procuring a remition'.²⁹ She reminded Lady Seafield of their meeting in London and of her duty and obligation and stated that if Lord Seafield helped Beaufort it would be an unwelcome 'reflection on himself'.³⁰ Lady Katherine later wrote in similar terms to Anna, Lady Leven, the sister of Lord Elcho, urging her to speak to her brother on the matter. Lady Katherine alluded to gossip she had heard which cast doubt on Elcho's dependability. She mentioned this but affected disbelief stating that Elcho would surely never, 'promise one thing and doe another'.³¹ Her barely concealed criticism of those who might behave in such a way was clear.

Fraser, during his months avoiding justice in the highlands, had opened communications with Archibald Campbell, first duke of Argyll and, playing on the rivalry between Argyll and the Murrays of Atholl, eventually persuaded Argyll to secure him a remission from King William in the autumn of 1700.³² This dispute required Lady Katherine to contact those involved in the legalities of the scandal and suggests that she did so indirectly through their female relatives. Her full knowledge of

²⁸ The enforced marriage by Simon Fraser in a bid to secure the Lovat title was referred to as the Beaufort Scandal, see Atholl, *Chronicles, I*, pp. 388-399.

²⁹ Blair MS 45.(I).80 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Anne, Lady Seafield, [Holyroodhouse] 29 February 1700.

³⁰ *Ibid.* Blair MS 45.(I).80 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Anne, Lady Seafield, [Holyroodhouse] 29 February 1700.

³¹ Blair MS 45.(I).264 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Anne, Lady Leven [Huntingtower] 24 October 1701.

³² E. M. Furgol, 'Fraser, Simon, eleventh Lord Lovat (1667/8–1747)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), online edn [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10122>, accessed June 2012]

the issue was vital and her ability to use current news or rumour to her benefit suggests gossip was not merely a diversion.

Women as Intermediaries.

Lady Katherine also contacted various family members to secure advice and favours. Her brothers, Ruglen and Selkirk, were frequently contacted on matters of finance that concerned Atholl.³³ Orkney, another brother, wrote regularly to his sister and as a serving soldier abroad he informed her of European developments and of his own movements and military postings to Holland and France.³⁴ He, like Atholl, sent her news from court and, in one letter of 1702, he enclosed a copy of a recent speech made by the king.³⁵ Later in 1702 he wrote to her from Kensington expressing concern over the king's health but more importantly revealed his own financial situation and the loss of revenue from his Irish estates, should the king die.³⁶ It was clearly important Lady Katherine was made aware of this and that her husband was also told. In this way Orkney indirectly informed other family members when he corresponded with his sister.

Lady Katherine requested favours from Orkney and wrote in 1701 to ask for a position for her husband's brother Lord Edward. Orkney responded that he would do

³³ Blair MS 45.(5).21 Katherine, Duchess of Atholl to Earl of Ruglen, [Dunkeld] 25 January 1705; Blair MS 45.(5).27 Earl of Ruglen to Katherine, Duchess of Atholl [Edinburgh] 31 January 1705. Blair MS 45.(5).11 Katherine, Duchess of Atholl to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, [Dunkeld]] 15 January 1705 ; Blair MS 45.(5).17 Katherine, Duchess of Atholl to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton [Dunkeld] 23 January 1705 [both regarding family finance and dispute between Atholl and Selkirk.]

³⁴ Blair MS 45.(1).201, Earl of Orkney to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [June 1701; Blair MS 45.(1).209 Earl of Orkney to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, July 1701.

³⁵ Blair MS 45.(2).2 Earl of Orkney to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine [London] [n.d.] January 1702.

³⁶ Blair MS 45.(2).2 Earl of Orkney to Katherine, Duchess of Atholl [London] [n.d.] January 1702 ; Blair MS 45.(2).72 Earl of Orkney to Katherine, Duchess of Atholl, [Kensington] 7 March 1702; Blair MS 45.(2).74 Earl of Orkney to Katherine, Duchess of Atholl, [Kensington] 10 March 1702. These estates had been gifted to his wife Lady Elizabeth Villiers see, R. Weil, 'Villiers [Hamilton], Elizabeth, Countess of Orkney (c.1657–1733)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, 2004), [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28290>]

what he could to secure, 'a company in a Scots regiment', for him.³⁷ Atholl also made the same request of Orkney in October of 1701 and their joint appeal to Orkney was successful.³⁸ Orkney wrote to Lady Katherine informing her that he was being ordered to Holland and hoped Lord Edward would, 'obey his summons promptly'.³⁹ Lord Edward wrote to his brother on arrival in Rotterdam saying he had been delayed by at least two weeks but was relieved that he had arrived before Orkney. His letter asked his brother to secure funds for him from their father as without money he would be 'dunright ruined' and did not wish to be, 'talked of by all hear'.⁴⁰ Securing a regiment for Lord Edward meant the task of funding his career then required further efforts within the family to request money. It is not clear whether Lord Edward had any correspondence with his sister-in-law over money but she certainly used her connection to secure his post in the first instance.

Orkney also needed soldiers for his regiment and as well as securing her brother-in-law's position another relative approached Lady Katherine with a lesser request. Catherine, Countess of Dunmore, wrote to her sister-in-law Lady Katherine in 1701 saying that a man who had been tried for theft at Blair Castle could be reprieved if he became a soldier.⁴¹ Lady Dunmore was aware that Atholl was seeking men on Orkney's behalf but did not write to Atholl himself preferring to use Lady Katherine as an intermediary. Lady Dunmore had been moved by the man's plight and believed he was penitent so she sought her sister-in-law's help in securing him a place in Orkney's regiment. It is likely that she was also appealing to Lady Katherine's devout nature in stressing the penitence of the prisoner. Regardless of religious implication this example

³⁷ Blair MS 45.(1).209 Earl of Orkney to Katherine, Duchess of Atholl [London] 10 July 1701.

³⁸ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 491 and 495.

³⁹ Blair MS 45.(2).47 Earl of Orkney to Katherine, Duchess of Atholl, [London] 14 February 1702.

⁴⁰ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 496.

⁴¹ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 486-7, Blair MS 44.(VI).325 Catherine, Countess of Dunmore to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Blair Castle] 30 July 1701.

illustrates a wider network at work on Orkney's behalf as his request to Atholl for men was taken up by women in the family. Much of Lady Katherine's correspondence and patronage activity was concerned with her husband's political career and this will be discussed in a further chapter. Her correspondence with her relatives shows that distance from them was no obstacle to sharing news, discussing finance, asking for favours and also acting as liaison in matters of patronage.

Women securing patronage at Court.

Noblewomen sought patronage to secure favours and support for their husbands or families in times of difficulty. Margaret, Lady Nairn, was sister-in-law to Atholl but her husband Lord Nairn was a Jacobite and although he was admitted to Parliament in 1690 by 1693 he was fined for absence and thereafter did not attend.⁴² This did not preclude his wife from fully engaging with the issues of the day. Her correspondence with another relative, Margaret, Countess of Panmure, demonstrates a lively interest in politics and union and these shall be explored in a further chapter.⁴³ However, Lady Nairn had to make solicitations at court for her husband's release after his arrest in 1708 for his activities in the threatened French invasion of 1707.⁴⁴ She travelled to London on his behalf and described her journey and those she met to Lady Panmure. Her report of being presented to the Queen proves she had the ability to operate at court without her husband although she admitted that, 'few car'd so much as to be thought friendly to

⁴² Paul *Scots Peerage, IV*, pp, 394-396.

⁴³ NAS GD45/14/245 Letter (21) from Margaret, Lady Nairn to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, 1702 - 1712.

⁴⁴ P. Hopkins, 'Nairne, William, styled second Lord Nairne and Jacobite first earl of Nairne (1664–1726)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19729>].

me'.⁴⁵ Lady Nairn confessed that she had, 'not made many visits', but instead had written to those who could, 'do my husband all the favour [that] lay in [their] power.'⁴⁶ She did not enjoy her time in London although when describing her conversation with the Queen she noted that she used the opportunity to, 'discourse of my Lord in particular, & at last being better acquainted, of all my country men in general'.⁴⁷ Her account of conversing with the monarch could be slightly exaggerated in the telling but she was successful in pleading her husband's case at that time. Lady Nairn operated effectively despite being in the uncertain position of a wife whose husband was under suspicion. She expected little favour or assistance but demonstrated independence and self confidence in pursuing his release. Her role has been construed as slightly heroic and other Jacobite women have been regarded in much the same way when they defended their menfolk under pressure.⁴⁸ Yet her actions were similar to other noblewomen in that she was exercising a female ability to exploit whatever patronage she could. Her objective, in saving her husband from imprisonment, was just more immediate than securing money or a position. Lady Nairn still sought favour and used the networks available to her and in this instance she approached those with the highest connections to secure an audience with Queen Anne herself.

Despite the distance from London Scottish noblewomen understood the importance of making the most of court connections. Lady Katherine wrote to her husband in 1702 enclosing a reply from Lady Marlborough concerning favours that

⁴⁵ NAS GD45/14/245/12, Margaret, Lady Nairn to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [London] 15 May 1708.

⁴⁶ NAS GD45/14/245/12, Margaret, Lady Nairn to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [London] 15 May 1708.

⁴⁷ NAS GD45/14/245/12, Margaret, Lady Nairn to Margaret, Countess of Panmure, [London] 15 May 1708.

⁴⁸ Graham, 'A Bundle of Jacobite letters'; B. Lenman, *The Jacobite Risings in Britain* (Dalkeith, 2004) pp. 153 and 161; Szechi, *1715*, pp. 245-246. Szechi pays particular attention to the case of Winifred Maxwell, countess of Nithsdale who helped her husband escape the Tower but also stresses the importance of elite Jacobite women in the creation of networks with social and political credit.

they wished to obtain from the queen.⁴⁹ Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough, was a favourite of Queen Anne and her extraordinary political intriguing and influence at court at has been acknowledged.⁵⁰ Another letter of 1703 suggests that Lady Katherine proposed a match between her son and Lady Marlborough's youngest daughter.⁵¹ Atholl also sought alliance through marriage although his letter was sent to the Duke of Marlborough in June of 1703 while Lady Katherine wrote to the Duchess in March of that year. Atholl wrote emotively that it was his mother's dying wish to secure a match between the two families as she had regarded the Marlboroughs as friends as well as 'good Protestants'.⁵² His tone was deferential and in stressing the marriage was his mother's wish he was reminding Marlborough of her lineage and even went so far as to mention his mother's service to the Duke and Duchess of York.⁵³ Atholl had not written to Lady Marlborough about the marriage but he had previously applied to her seeking the title of duke for his father. Her reply made no commitment to this, just stated that, 'it was not the time', for such an honour.⁵⁴ Lady Marlborough's response to Lady Katherine thanked her for the suggestion of a marriage but again did not commit to this and her youngest daughter actually married the Duke of Montagu. Lady Marlborough praised Atholl's 'zealous and usefull' service to the Queen and she was confident he would, 'always follow the true interest of her majesty'.⁵⁵ These letters demonstrate how patronage was a dual effort by husband and wife. Many people

⁴⁹ Blair MS 45.(2).92, Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, 9 April 1702.

⁵⁰ O. Field, *The Favourite Sarah Duchess of Marlborough*, (London, 2002); Weil, *Political Passions*, pp.162-168

⁵¹ Blair MS 45.(3).29 Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [St James'] 17 March 1703.

⁵² Atholl, *Chronicles*, II, p. 9-10; Blair MS 45.(3).82 Duke of Atholl to the Duke of Marlborough, [Blair] 26 June 1703.

⁵³ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, pp.153-154, Lady Amelia Stanley was the daughter of James, seventh earl of Derby. She married the Marquis of Atholl in 1659 and a letter from the Duchess of York dated 1679 supports their friendship, see Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 178; Blair MS 29.I.(3).70 H.R.H the Duchess of York to Amelia, Marchioness of Atholl [St James] 18 March 1697.

⁵⁴ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 504; Blair MS 45.(3).28 Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough to Earl of Tullibardine, [St James's] 17 March 1703.

⁵⁵ Blair MS 45.(3).28 Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [St James's] 17 March 1703.

petitioned the Queen's favourite for favour but Lady Katherine was helping her husband maintain the connection originally made by his parents and attempted to strengthen that association through marriage. This attempt also demonstrates that although Scots generally married Scots if there was a family connection or means to do so then some families did try to make an English marriage.

A letter from William Keith and Lord Blantyre to the Duke of Hamilton regarding Lady Marlborough suggests how men viewed female patronage. Keith and Blantyre had arrived in London in 1702 and had been advised that, 'the first thing to be done should be to address the Treasurer and my Lady Marlborough for to acquaint the Queen of our business', in order to solicit a 'favourable reception'.⁵⁶ Their recognition of needing the favour of a female favourite is clear. These men did not discount the patronage power of noblewomen and show a contemporary understanding of the role women played. Their admission strengthens the argument for greater acknowledgment of female roles and not regarding this behaviour as something which was confined to women of unique status.

Relatives writing: using the ties of kin.

As well as petitioning powerful women Scottish noblewomen relied on family connections and relations. In a nobleman's career any change would have impacted on his wife and networks of kin were vital. The Earl of Mar shared a great deal with his wife but he does not appear to have made explicit demands of his wife in terms of asking her to seek favours. Mar was obviously aware of his wife's family connections and his letters refer to her father, Thomas Hay, seventh earl of Kinoull (1660-1719) and

⁵⁶ NAS GD406/1/4817 William Keith to the Duke of Hamilton, [London] 18 June 1702.

her relative, John Hay, second marquis of Tweeddale (1645-1713) who was High Commissioner to the Scottish Parliament in 1704.⁵⁷ Mar's letters suggest that Lady Mar wrote to her relatives on his behalf or at least that she also wrote to them when her husband did. In June of 1704 Mar wrote to Lady Mar saying, 'I wrote yesterday to yr unckle & sent yr letter too he rules the roost so dear Magie you must make my court'.⁵⁸ This example may not suggest anything more than Mar's prudence in cultivating the relationships his marriage presented or that he enclosed a letter from his wife along with his own. Whether Mar hoped Lady Mar would do more than just 'make his court' is not clear.

Some women had the responsibility of providing for and maintaining their families, even from a young age. Grisell Baillie, daughter of Patrick Hume, first earl of Marchmont, is recognised as having saved her father from persecution and for supporting her family in exile.⁵⁹ Lady Grisell's ability to share information and make requests for her family while they lived in exile prior to the Revolution is worth noting. This activity can be seen as a precursor to women's pursuit of political patronage in the union era. Once the family were established in Holland in 1685 and after Marchmont's part in Argyll's abortive rebellion, a decree of forfeiture was passed and Marchmont's estates were lost.⁶⁰ Lady Grisell and her mother, 'went to London by sea', to do what they could to secure a financial allowance where 'they long attended' and appealed to friends for assistance.⁶¹ This means of securing allowances after the loss of estates by those forced into exile was not unusual but it shows Lady Grisell's early involvement with patronage. Rachel, Lady Russell, was named as having helped the family at this

⁵⁷ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, V, pp. 626-632.

⁵⁸ NAS GD124/15/231/2 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar [Edinburgh] 16 June 1704.

⁵⁹ Scott-Moncrieffe, *Household Book of Lady Griselle Baillie*; Stanhope. *Memoirs*; Warrender, *Marchmont and Humes*.

⁶⁰ John R. Young, 'Hume, Patrick, first earl of Marchmont (1641-1724)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, 2004), [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14150, accessed 5 Oct 2010].

⁶¹ Stanhope, *Memoirs*, p.44. Russell and Wharton families mentioned.

time and a later letter written by Marchmont after 1701 paid his respects to her benevolence.⁶² Marchmont wrote to her to recommend his son to her ‘countenance and favour’ and to ask her to introduce him to the Duke of Bedford to further his career.⁶³ Marchmont maintained his connection to Lady Russell and relied on her patronage long after exile was over.

While in exile Marchmont wrote under various pseudonyms and the recipients of many letters he sent from various locations were women. He wrote frequently to his wife, sisters and cousins requesting news and information.⁶⁴ Women provided men with a network which offered information and support. Other like minded men would have been in a similar position to Marchmont and women assumed this role of gathering and disseminating intelligence as well as managing households and finance in their absence. One example is a letter written by Marchmont from Bordeaux in 1686 referring to worries over money and expressing his desire for information about friends and allies.⁶⁵ While this may not be considered to be part of formal patronage it suggests an informal patronage network intended to aid others in the same position. Grisell Baillie’s later correspondence with another associated family and *squadron volante* member, William Bennet of Grubbet continued this exchange of news between the families and she also relied upon Bennet’s help and advice on a variety of matters.⁶⁶

Acknowledging the association between *squadron* families is important as the basis

⁶² NAS GD158/966 1701-1705, Marchmont Letter Book, Earl of Marchmont to Rachel, Lady Russell, p.150.

⁶³ NAS GD158/966 1701-1705, Marchmont Letter Book, Earl of Marchmont to Rachel, Lady Russell, p.150.

⁶⁴ NAS GD158/1017, Letters (6) from Sir Patrick Hume to his wife, [Rotterdam and Amsterdam] Jan-April 1685; GD158/1018 Letters (19) from Sir Patrick Hume to his wife, [Bordeaux and Geneva] 1685-6; GD158/1019, Letters (4) from Sir Patrick Hume to Eleanor Herbert, [Bordeaux] 1685; GD158/1026, Letters (2) from Sir Patrick Hume to Lady Jedburgh, [?] October 1686; GD158/1027, Sir Patrick Hume to Lady Hilton, [?] 7-17 February 1687; GD158/1032, Letters (4) from Sir Patrick Hume to his wife or sister, [?] February –March 1687.

⁶⁵ Stanhope, *Memoirs*, Appendix IV; G. Scott Thompson, *Life in a Noble Household* (London, 1937) and M. Berry, *Letter of Rachel Lady Russell Volume I and II*, (London, 1853).

⁶⁶ NAS GD205/33/3/2 /5, Grisell Baillie to William Bennet, [Mellerstain] 3 August 1707; NAS GD205/33/3/2/6 Grisell Baillie to William Bennet, [Mellerstain] 16 September 1707 and NAS GD205/33/3/2/13 Grisell Baillie to William Bennet, [Rutherford] 16 February 1709.

for the political affiliation between these families originated even before the revolution period.⁶⁷ Women were requested for news and support in a way that suggests the importance of their role: they had something that others needed and benefitted from acquiring. As such they solicited for help in much the same way that others were asked for posts or pensions.

Using family relationships to pursue patronage.

Noblewomen frequently made requests for help and financial support from male relatives and letters to the Earl of Mar show what favours he was asked to fulfil. A letter from his aunt Sophia Erskine, Lady Forbes, dated 1695 noted the death of John Keirie a, 'faithfull servant to your family', and friend of her son who had always been willing to do, 'any good office within his power.'⁶⁸ The letter was a reminder to Mar of his wider family and the connections he could depend upon. His grandmother, and Lady Forbes' stepmother, Jane Mackenzie, was another correspondent. In 1695 she wrote to him on a matter involving Lady Forbes' husband who had a financial dispute with a local laird. She admitted that Forbes, 'prestt me to writ to you', although she assured Mar he could expect an account of the matter from Forbes himself.⁶⁹ She professed reluctance to, 'be so oft troubling, in medling in your business', but stated that, 'my Lord Forbes forces me to itt'.⁷⁰ This demonstrates how a noble of lesser status pressed the women around him to act on his behalf with their closer relatives. That the Dowager complied but also apologised for her actions indicates her experience and understanding

⁶⁷ The connections between squadrone families is outlined and explored in Chapter 1.

⁶⁸ NAS GD124/15/198 Sophia Erskine, Lady Forbes to Earl of Mar, [Erskine] 26 October 1695.

⁶⁹ NAS GD124/15/197/1 Jane Mackenzie, Dowager Countess of Mar to Earl of Mar, [Pitsligo] 31 May 1695; NAS GD124/15/197/2 Jane Mackenzie, Dowager Countess of Mar to Earl of Mar, [Pitsligo] 5 September 1695.

⁷⁰ NAS GD124/15/197/2 Jane Mackenzie, Dowager Countess of Mar to Earl of Mar, [Pitsligo] 5 September 1695.

of how family networks operated. To achieve something in favour of one relative usually meant troubling another.

Men who held particular posts became the focus of efforts to secure favour. Mar became Secretary for Scotland in 1705 and it is worth looking at female relatives who wrote to him seeking to benefit from the patronage then at his disposal. Margaret, Lady Napier, wrote to Mar in February of 1706.⁷¹ As a relative her letter dealt with various family matters including her own health, the health of Lady Mar and also the disastrous marriage of Lord Grange, Mar's brother, which had just taken place.⁷² The main thrust of her letter, however, was her own business and in particular the securing of payment of her pension. She thanked Mar for his, 'kind concern in my affaires', but went on to say that she had, 'not yet had any affects of the promises was made me'.⁷³ Lady Napier courteously suggested that the, 'poverty of the treasury', was at fault rather than blaming any individual, specifically Mar. She reminded Mar of what Queen Anne had instructed to be done for her and that the Queen had previously, 'challenged my Lord Cromarty for not getting it done'.⁷⁴ Cromartie had been Secretary of State for Scotland prior to Mar's appointment. He was also related to the Erskine family so again this family connection had been exploited and shows Lady Napier had previously requested assistance from relatives with authority. It also indicated to Mar how long she had waited for her money. Further letters show that Lady Napier was unsuccessful. She did not receive her money and her health deteriorated in the following months. Her son-in-

⁷¹ NAS GD124/15/318 Margaret, Lady Napier to Earl of Mar, [?] 20 February 1706. Her mother was Elizabeth Erskine, daughter of the fourth earl of Mar and wife of the second Lord Napier. This made Lady Napier's mother a cousin to the Earl of Mar's grandfather see, Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VI, pp, 423-427.

⁷² NAS GD124/15/318 Margaret, Lady Napier to Earl of Mar, [?] 20 February 1706.

⁷³ NAS GD124/15/318 Margaret, Lady Napier to Earl of Mar, [?] 20 February 1706.

⁷⁴ NAS GD124/15/318 Margaret, Lady Napier to Earl of Mar, [?] 20 February 1706.

law, William Scott of Thirlestane, wrote on her behalf to Mar and, after her death in 1706, he continued to write in order to secure the pension for his son.⁷⁵

Sophia, Lady Forbes, wrote to her nephew in his capacity as secretary on behalf of her son, Lord Pitsligo, concerning a financial dispute with the laird of Banchory. She again enlisted the help of Jane Mackenzie, Dowager Countess of Mar, her mother and Mar's grandmother, to further Pitsligo's case. Both letters are dated March 1706 and used similar language.⁷⁶ Both women condemned the injustice Pitsligo was suffering and pleaded for Mar's intervention. The Dowager's letter points out that the 'tedious affair' has cost much to both Pitsligo and his mother and Mar should use his 'endeavors' to, 'putt an end to it'.⁷⁷ Both women wanted the same thing and so they both offered the same incentive to Mar to secure his intervention. Lady Forbes wrote that her son's problems would, 'alienate him from some in parliament.' She wished her son was associated with Mar and she hoped this, 'might yet do if this affair with Banchory is sett right'.⁷⁸ The Dowager wrote in a similar manner but was less oblique, saying that if matters were settled then, 'I am sur you would be content to have him on the sam side as yow in parliament'.⁷⁹ Although Lady Forbes' language was less direct both women were suggesting the political support of Pitsligo in return for Mar's favour. Lady Forbes also suggested that alliance with Mar would be a good influence on Pitsligo.⁸⁰ The

⁷⁵ NAS GD124/15/415 William Scott to Earl of Mar, [Edinburgh] 1 July 1706; NAS GD124/15/445 Margaret, Lady Napier to Earl of Mar, [Bath] 20 July 1706; NAS GD124/15/528 William Scott to Earl of Mar [?] 18 April 1707 and NAS GD124/15/594 letters 96) from William Scott to Earl of Mar, [Edinburgh] 3 June – December 1707.

⁷⁶ NAS GD 124/15/366 Sophia Erskine, Lady Forbes to Earl of Mar, [Pitsligo] 22 March 1706; NAS GD124/15/367 Jane MacKenzie, Dowager Countess of Mar to Earl of Mar, [Pitsligo] 22 March 1706. Jane Mackenzie, second wife of the fifth earl of Mar, was daughter to George, earl of Seaforth and Sophia her daughter married Alexander, third lord Forbes of Pitsligo in 1676, see Paul, *Scots Peerage*, V, p. 262.

⁷⁷ NAS GD124/15/367 Jane MacKenzie, Dowager Countess of Mar to Earl of Mar, [Pitsligo] 22 March 1706.

⁷⁸ NAS GD124/15/366 Sophia Erskine, Lady Forbes, to Earl of Mar, [Pitsligo] 22 March 1706.

⁷⁹ NAS GD124/15/367 Jane MacKenzie, Dowager Countess of Mar, to Earl of Mar, [Pitsligo] 22 March 1706.

⁸⁰ NAS GD124/15/366 Sophia Erskine, Lady Forbes, to Earl of Mar, [Pitsligo] 22 March 1706.

Dowager reiterated the flattering sentiment that Mar's friendship to Pitsligo would do him good. She ended by urging Mar, 'my dear grandchild, itt is now on youe to doe for your frind and I hop you will not nelgeck the occation'.⁸¹ Her grandmotherly concern and loving tone almost obscure the fact that she was discussing finance and possibly political support. The similarity of the language and the timing of the letters suggests the women had discussed and agreed to request Mar's intervention. What they asked for and their implied incentive also seemed to be agreed beforehand and this would not be lost on Mar. Whether Pitsligo was in any way a useful ally or support to Mar should not detract from the point that Pitsligo's mother and grandmother were both using their connections to solicit assistance. The reference to the affair costing Lady Forbes as much as Pitsligo can be seen as a clear indication that they wanted Mar's intervention for her benefit too and not just for Pitsligo. Of course as women they had nothing tangible to offer Mar by way of support in parliament. This example illustrates how women seeking to secure support over a financial dispute did not make any separation between the financial and political aspects of the matter. That they believed they could offer this on Pitsligo's behalf gave them some kind of concrete inducement to offer Mar, something more substantial than the goodwill and positive regard of women.

Another female relative wrote to Mar in 1707, Isabel, Dowager Countess of Seaforth, and the initial line of her first letter mentions her 'brother Cromarty' an instant reminder of her connection through kin.⁸² The letter was short with few words of greetings or pleasantries. She began by writing that, 'I hop I neid not use many arguments of words to persuade your lops; to give me your assistance and help', and that for a number of months she, 'had non of my own to live on but what strangers has

⁸¹ NAS GD124/15/367 Jane MacKenzie, Dowager Countess of Mar, to Earl of Mar,[Pitsligo] 22 March 1706.

⁸² NAS GD124/15/502/1 Isabel, Dowager Countess of Seaforth to Earl of Mar, [?] 22 March 1707.

charitably sent mee'.⁸³ She assured him she had confidence in his support but that she, 'flatter[ed] myself so much as to make no doubt of it'. She finished the letter by reminding him of her connection to him once more, writing, 'I being an Erskine bearn and your uncklls wyf maks mee fully rely upon your kindness and friendship'.⁸⁴ Two further letters contained similar language and sentiments urging him to help her. She acknowledged that, 'he would be taken up with great affairs', but hoped she, 'would never repent of your being charitably kind'.⁸⁵ Adopting this kind of language alluded to his position and his capability to address her concerns as well as flattering him as being kind and principled. Her final letter more directly pointed out that she had contacted him, 'both befor and since yow went to London', which can be read as a reminder of their long standing connection and also that she was not merely exploiting his new position of power.⁸⁶ The Dowager would have been aware of the numerous people seeking to take advantage of Mar's new authority and the vast patronage at his disposal and so she wrote reiterating her personal relationship to him. She ended by assuring him that, 'if ever in anything I can serv your lop; you shall find mee gratefully sencibl of your favour'.⁸⁷ The Dowager was a relative, a Jacobite and had been, 'in charge of her husband's affairs in the north', for many years both before his death in 1678 and after.⁸⁸ Offering her services to Mar would have been significant to him and in this instance a noblewoman did have a tangible incentive to offer

The value of a noblewoman's services has been underestimated by historians who have overlooked the experience of women in history. Mar himself obviously felt

⁸³ NAS GD124/15/502/1 Isabel, Dowager Countess of Seaforth to Earl of Mar, [?] 22 March 1707.

⁸⁴ NAS GD124/15/502/1 Isabel, Dowager Countess of Seaforth to Earl of Mar, [?] 22 March 1707. See also Fraser, *The Earls of Cromartie*, for reference to this family connection between Mar and Cromartie.

⁸⁵ NAS DG124/15/502/2 Isabel, Dowager Countess of Seaforth to Earl of Mar, [?] 12 April 1707.

⁸⁶ NAS GD124/15/502/3 Isabel, Dowager Countess of Seaforth to Earl of Mar, [?] 12 June 1707.

⁸⁷ NAS GD124/15/502/3 Isabel, Dowager Countess of Seaforth to Earl of Mar, [?] 12 June 1707.

⁸⁸ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, VIII, 509; A. Mackenzie, *History of the Clan MacKenzie* (Inverness, 1879), pp. 208-209.

differently and his reply to another female relative who wrote to him asking for favour emphasises this. The original letter had come from Catherine, Lady Cardross wife of Henry Erskine, third lord Cardross seeking a position for her son Charles.⁸⁹ Mar replied to her by acknowledging her letter and hoping, 'the hurrie of business will plead my excus for my not returning an answer sooner'.⁹⁰ However, his next few lines contained a clear reprimand, 'I must confess when those I have served...not onlie putt itt out of my power to doe it funder, but makes me blamed for what I have already done is small incuragment for me'.⁹¹ He continued that he regretted having to inform her of his displeasure but that he would continue to serve her son.⁹² Mar's comments suggest that although he had helped the Cardross family his efforts for them had not been properly recognised. His apology to Lady Cardross for his delay in responding was a polite reminder that her requests were secondary to his own business and he also felt it necessary to state that he did what he could, when he could for his friends. This letter demonstrates that patronage was considered to be a two way arrangement and that Mar believed he had not received from Lady Cardross, or her family, the consideration which his service ought to have secured.

Widows seeking patronage.

Another category of noblewomen seeking patronage were those women who had to manage the affairs of their children. Widows could often become proficient in utilising patronage as the death of a husband meant the task of securing the family inheritance

⁸⁹ The Cardross family were descended from Erskine, Earls of Mar, Paul, *Scots Peerage, II*, pp. 365-367. Lady Cardross outlived her husband who died in 1693 so at the time of this letter she was a widow and her eldest son David had also succeeded to the title of Buchan. It is not clear in what way Mar was annoyed with the family or whether this was due to her second eldest son Charles' behaviour.

⁹⁰ NAS GD124/15/472 Earl of Mar to Catherine, Lady Cardross, [Edinburgh] 14 November 1706.

⁹¹ NAS GD124/15/472 Earl of Mar to Catherine, Lady Cardross, [Edinburgh] 14 November 1706.

⁹² NAS GD124/15/472 Earl of Mar to Catherine, Lady Cardross, [Edinburgh] 14 November 1706.

fell to them. In 1702 Mar was written to by a Buchan relative, Henrietta Erskine, concerning legal issues relating to property in her son's marriage contract.⁹³ She begged Mar's pardon for depending on his friendship but reported that her lawyers had warned against her son receiving, 'the gift and ward of his marriage', in her name because, as a widow, this would prove 'ineffectual'. She suggested that King William should be, 'prevailed with to write to the Lord of the Treasurie and Exchequer... shewing that it is his pleasure to grant the gift to me'.⁹⁴ Lady Buchan then pre-empted the possible objections to her suggested course of action. She assured Mar this was not being done to defraud creditors nor would it in any way prejudice her son's interest and she made all assurances necessary to Mar.⁹⁵ She justified her actions as essential in eluding, 'the pretensions of...enemys of the family', who, 'might ruin my sons interest'.⁹⁶ A second letter was even more dramatic as her attempts to keep a grip on the family finances and property foundered. She announced that her, 'sons greatest enemys have got themselves named administrators to him and his fortune', and that she and her children faced ruin unless Mar's interest at court could protect them.⁹⁷ Lady Buchan reminded Mar of her connections. She instructed Mar to tell the Duke of Queensberry that, 'my mother being a daughter of the house of Dalhousie had the honour to be his fathers cousin german'.⁹⁸ She clearly wished to utilise all possible connections and asked that Mar involve Queensberry in the matter. What she could offer Mar by way of an incentive to assist her is not clear but her letters indicate that she believed, 'all the returns of gratitude [that] can be desired of me', would have to

⁹³ The Buchan family were descended from Erskine, earls of Mar, see Paul, *Scots Peerage Vol II*, pp. 246-247. Henrietta was daughter to James, earl of Buchan and wife to Walter Forbes of Tolquhon.

⁹⁴ NAS GD124/15/218/1 Henrietta Erskine, Lady Buchan to Earl of Mar, [Edinburgh] 6 January 1702.

⁹⁵ NAS GD124/15/218/1 Henrietta Erskine, Lady Buchan to Earl of Mar, [Edinburgh] 6 January 1702.

⁹⁶ NAS GD124/15/218/1 Henrietta Erskine, Lady Buchan to Earl of Mar, [Edinburgh] 6 January 1702.

⁹⁷ NAS GD124/15/218/2 Henrietta Erskine, Lady Buchan to Earl of Mar, [Edinburgh] 10 January 1702.

⁹⁸ NAS GD124/15/218/1 Henrietta Erskine, Lady Buchan to Earl of Mar, [Edinburgh] 10 January 1702.

suffice.⁹⁹ Lady Buchan's legal knowledge and familiarity with business and financial matters are evident from the letters. She referred to lawyers, justified her actions, intimated her intentions and knew who had to be appealed to for support. Lady Buchan exploited her relationships to secure patronage and, like other similarly placed widows, she educated herself about legal affairs in a bid to maintain control of their family's interests.

Another widow who requested assistance and support from family members was Susan, Lady Dundonald. After her husband's death in 1690 several men were appointed as tutors to her sons. These included her brother the Earl of Arran, later fourth Duke of Hamilton and also her husband's Cochrane relatives. They controlled some financial matters and also made decisions on the education of the boys and where the family lived. Like her sister Lady Katherine, Lady Dundonald corresponded regularly with her brothers and asked for advice on many family issues concerning her sons' education, finances and health. She informed her brother Arran about a proposed trip to 'ye baths' with her eldest son for his health but wrote that, 'I find the Leaird of Killmaronock has a mind to apear violently', against the plan and noted that, 'ye more he is against itt the more I am for itt'.¹⁰⁰ This demonstrates her own sense of status and giving Kilmarnock the title of 'Leaird' reminded Arran that Kilmarnock's position was significantly lower than their own. Lady Dundonald assured Arran that her family agreed with her which bolstered her opposition to the man who had designs on the estate of her son, the young Lord Dundonald. Lady Dundonald also asked Arran to intervene in her legal matters and she requested his support in a forthright manner. In November of 1694 she was involved in a further dispute with relatives naming, 'this villen W [William] Cochrane',

⁹⁹ NAS GD124/15/218/1 Henrietta Erskine, Lady Buchan to Earl of Mar, [Edinburgh] 10 January 1702.

¹⁰⁰ NAS GD406/1/9099 Susan, Countess of Dundonald to Earl of Arran, [?] 3 June 1694. This Cochrane was probably William of Kilmaronock Susan, Lady Dundonald's brother-in-law.

who she believed was, ‘guilty of everything yt is ill’.¹⁰¹ She had been, ‘consulting Sr James Ogelvie and comesary Dalrump’, and knew they too had been writing to Arran to, ‘see how to turn out WC [Cochrane] wch I must desire yr assistance in’.¹⁰² She instructed Arran on what she wanted done and promised him any legal information he required.¹⁰³ From this letter we find that Lady Dundonald, working on her own, had already begun legal proceedings and informed Arran of those she had asked to help. She was not requesting Arran’s advice in this instance but appealing for his support. Despite fighting against the intrigues of her son’s tutors, like Lady Buchan, her status as a widow did not mean she was being managed or manipulated by the men she was dealing with. The use of ‘we’ not ‘they’ in her writing placed her in an equal position to the men who were helping her. She ended her letter by asking her brother to write to Lady Mary Cochrane, the wife of William Cochrane, to, ‘make ye baron [Cochrane] doe better things’.¹⁰⁴ Lady Dundonald had a direct approach to securing patronage and an ability to target the right men to help her. She also assumed that writing to ask a wife to make her husband behave correctly was an acceptable course of action. Lady Dundonald could have written to Lady Cochrane herself but knew that a letter from the future Duke of Hamilton would carry more weight than anything she could write.

Exploiting connections.

The Duke of Hamilton received requests from other noblewomen, not just his sisters.

Robina, Countess of Forfar (1661-1741) made regular requests to Hamilton (as Earl of

¹⁰¹ NAS GD406/1/7364 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran,[Edinburgh] 27 October 1694.

¹⁰² NAS GD406/1/7364 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran,[Edinburgh] 27 October 1694.

¹⁰³ NAS GD406/1/7364 Susan, Countess of Dundonald, to Earl of Arran,[Edinburgh] 27 October 1694.

¹⁰⁴ It is likely that the William Cochrane referred to was a cousin of Lady Dundonald’s father-in-law as he was noted as being a guardian to the fourth earl, Susan’s son. William Cochrane married Mary, daughter of the Earl of Kincardine in 1681 see Paul, *Scots Peerage*, III, p. 348.

Arran) and wrote in 1695 to seek his help in securing a pension that had been promised to her husband.¹⁰⁵ Lady Forfar wrote very fully on the matter, naming those involved and going so far as to instruct Arran what to write. She understood that, 'Sir John Dalrimple had been ordered to draw up a letter of pention', which he either through, 'willfullness or forgetfulness negelected to doe', although she was confident that Lord Kintore and Lord Carmichael had had their pensions settled.¹⁰⁶ Her knowledge of other peoples' affairs was used to advance her own situation. She suggested Arran, 'speak pressingly to the secretarys', in her husband's favour and, 'lett em know that you will not only take it ill if any thing be done to his prejudice...but expect they will obtain an order for that six hundred they know is so justly dew him'.¹⁰⁷ Her strident demands were softened by flattering Arran, saying that others, 'stand more in awe of you than anybody', but the letter was lengthy and her tone revealed her irritation. Lady Forfar clearly had a reputation in seeking patronage. As well as her letters to Arran, his father wrote to Duchess Anne in 1693 informing her he had been successful in asking the king to appoint their son, Lord John, as general of the mint. However, he noted Lady Forfar's similar attempt to secure the post as she had, 'made a great deal of interest for her husband to have the place'.¹⁰⁸

Lady Forfar wrote further letters to Arran in 1697 again asking for help with a pension and then in 1698 asking Arran to persuade the Earl of Orkney to do something in her son's favour. In this letter she also recommended Lord Haddo to Arran by stating that he was, 'intensely devoted to your services.'¹⁰⁹ Lady Forfar not only used her connections to ask favours for herself but she obviously sought patronage for others, in this case Haddo. Another relative, John Lockhart of Mauldslie, assured her that he

¹⁰⁵ NAS GD406/1/4060 Robina, Countess of Forfar to Earl of Arran, [?] 23 February 1695.

¹⁰⁶ NAS GD406/1/4060 Robina, Countess of Forfar to Earl of Arran, [?] 23 February 1695.

¹⁰⁷ NAS GD406/1/4060 Robina, Countess of Forfar to Earl of Arran, [?] 23 February 1695

¹⁰⁸ NAS GD406/1/7329 Duke of Hamilton to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, [London] 16 November 1693.

¹⁰⁹ NAS GD406/1/4316 Robina, Countess of Forfar to Earl of Arran, [Edinburgh] 15 March 1698.

would never do anything to, 'shagrine that family [Hamilton]', and, 'this you may lett his grace know'.¹¹⁰ Lockhart trusted that Lady Forfar's connection with Arran was better than his own and his comments suggest he used her as an intermediary.

Lady Forfar also asked the Earl of Mar for his intervention in her affairs and wrote in 1707 for his help in securing something, 'for our immediate supply'.¹¹¹ She admitted to the difficulties she faced in struggling, 'att present both to maintain my son...and other expencys'.¹¹² She informed Mar that she had also written to Lord Loudon on the matter and hoped that he would, 'joyn with your lops; to speak a favourable word'.¹¹³ Lady Forfar was a forthright correspondent and openly admitting her apparently dire financial state could be attributed to her candid nature or her desperation in such circumstances.

Other women, and some men, were equally open and without embarrassment about their finances and personal situations while attempting to secure favour. Mary, Countess of Dalhousie wrote to Mar in 1706 begging that on, 'no account should her husband's pay bee stopt', or she and her children would face 'ruin'.¹¹⁴ William, third earl of Dalhousie had died in 1682 and a warrant had been granted to allow the countess to enjoy the same precedence despite her marriage to John, Lord Bellenden in 1683. In 1707 she wrote to Mar again, this time because Lord Bellenden had died and she was attempting to secure, 'the gift of my Lords escheat', meaning property that would support her after his death. Further letters suggest that she was under pressure on her

¹¹⁰ NAS GD406/1/1140 John Lockhart to Robina, Countess of Forfar, [Mauldslie] 7 June 1702.

¹¹¹ NAS GD124/15/641/1 Robina, Countess of Forfar to Earl of Mar, [?] 14 July 1707; NAS GD124/15/641/2 Robina, Countess of Forfar to Earl of Mar, [?] 8 August 1707.

¹¹² NAS GD124/15/641/2 Robina, Countess of Forfar to Earl of Mar, [?] 8 August 1707.

¹¹³ NAS GD124/15/641/1 Robina, Countess of Forfar to Earl of Mar, [?] 14 July 1707

¹¹⁴ NAS GD124/15/431 Mary, Countess of Dalhousie to Earl of Mar, [?] 10 July 1706.

son's behalf and requested Mar's help and indicated Lord Glasgow's involvement too

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Although Lady Dalhousie, like Lady Forfar, openly discussed sensitive financial and family issues in this case she appealed for Mar's secrecy hoping that, 'none but your lordship should know of it'.¹¹⁶ Lady Dalhousie expressed her gratitude and stressed her family would remain 'your servants'.¹¹⁷ The language she used was designed to express the urgency she required in the belief that if these men failed her she would face ruin. Like other women writing for favours Lady Dalhousie adopted a style that flattered the patron while stressing her requirements as imperative. She also bordered on the dramatic to press for action. Like many women she admitted to contacting other men who were also in a position to help her. Lady Forfar noted the involvement of Lord Loudon.¹¹⁸ By choosing to refer to Lord Glasgow in her letters Lady Dalhousie was ensuring Mar was aware that someone else would know of his, Mar's, involvement in the matter just as he was aware of Lord Glasgow's. Her notion of secrecy may have extended to several individuals. The inclusion of others in such a letter would not have been a casual reference. Revealing another party within a letter should be read as yet another incentive to act.

Women seeking positions for men.

¹¹⁵ NAS GD124/15/576 Letters (3) from Mary, Countess of Dalhousie to Earl of Mar, [?] 24 May -14 June 1707.

¹¹⁶ NAS GD124/15/576/1 Mary, Countess of Dalhousie to Earl of Mar,[?] 24 May 1707.

¹¹⁷ NAS GD124/15/576/3 Mary, Countess of Dalhousie to Earl of Mar, [?] 14 June 1707.

¹¹⁸ Loudoun was joint secretary of State with Mar at this time, so Lady Forfar was making it known she had approached them both, G. F. R. Barker, 'Campbell, Hugh, third earl of Loudoun, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4503>].

As well as procuring financial help with a direct and open approach noblewomen also asked for positions for their husbands with equal candour. Sophia, Countess of Annandale (1668-1716) wrote to the Chancellor, Marchmont, in 1698 to ask for a position for her husband. She wrote that Marchmont's, 'favour and frindship incurages me to give you this truble', and she hoped he would use his interest to, 'procure for my lord the tressuers deputs place now vacant by my Lord Raiths dath'.¹¹⁹ She considered this would be easy for him to achieve as she believed the king had been harsh to their 'partie' in, 'the disposal of the presidents place', and that he, the king, would retrieve the situation a little, 'by oblidging thos of the contrair', in this way.¹²⁰ Her understanding of the politics were quite clear in that the loss of one position could mean the gift of another with her husband, potentially, benefitting from this. Lady Annandale continued saying she was, 'perfitlie persuaded if your lordship and lord Tullibardine use your intrest in this you will prevail'. She too let her patron know that others were also aware of her request. She ended by referring to the, 'circumstances of affairs of our partie...speaks of themselves'.¹²¹ The political implications of this letter will be discussed in a further chapter. Her knowledge and her ability to communicate her political views in a letter designed to further her husband's career show more than just a request being made. This letter divulged her personal political opinion. It is arguable that a woman who revealed her position might have strengthened the possibility of a favourable response to her request. Aligning herself with her patron's position would not harm her chances, especially if she had gauged this correctly. Once again there is no evidence of a tangible incentive but the implication that Lady Annandale's husband was of the same opinion would mean that any real reward would come through him.

¹¹⁹ Fraser, *Annandale*, p. 165, Sophia, Countess of Annandale to Patrick, Earl of Marchmont, [?] 29 March 1689.

¹²⁰ Fraser, *Annandale*, p. 165.

¹²¹ Fraser, *Annandale*, p. 165.

This request was not just about the position but an alignment of political views and her request shows this association being constructed by a woman. Her private efforts would carry public consequences, if her husband secured the position and if this led to political alliance. The broader implications of this apparently simple request for a position require much fuller consideration and demonstrate a fundamental role which noblewomen pursued.

The persistence of some women in pursuing their aims highlights the determination of noblewomen to further family interest. Margaret, Lady Sharp, asked Mar for a position and favour for her husband, Sir William, and also for their son in 1706. She noted that, 'there is now a vacancie amongst the Lords of Session', and, 'tho Sir Williams modestie may keep him of himself to ask any such thing', modesty did not deter her from asking in his stead.¹²² Lady Sharp was confident that if, as rumour suggested, Sir Alexander Ogilvie was to be given the first vacancy then her husband could take Sir Alexander's existing post. She assured Mar her husband had submitted himself, 'intirely... to your will and favour'.¹²³ A further four letters in 1707 saw Lady Sharp repeat her requests for favour. Her letters follow a conventional pattern in stressing their connection, flattering Mar over his abilities to do the family service and also dramatically stating their financial position to press Mar for immediate action. Lady Sharp complained that, 'meany find the Queens bountie that has not our pretension', but she believed her family could expect some favour through Mar.¹²⁴ The death of Mar's wife in 1707 did not deter Lady Sharp from persisting and although, 'sorie with all my heart', for his loss she still wanted to know what could be done for her husband and son.¹²⁵ Her next communication began by worrying that her letter to

¹²² NAS GD124/15/358 Margaret, Lady Sharp to Earl of Mar, [Edinburgh] 19 March 1706.

¹²³ NAS GD124/15/358 Margaret, Lady Sharp to Earl of Mar, [Edinburgh] 19 March 1706.

¹²⁴ NAS GD124/15/526/1 Margaret, Lady Sharp to Earl of Mar, [Stonyhill] 17 April 1707.

¹²⁵ NAS GD124/15/526/2 Margaret, Lady Sharp to Earl of Mar, [Stonyhill] 21 June 1707.

him had ‘miscarried’ as she had, ‘nevere had the honour of a line from you since your parting from Scotland’.¹²⁶ Although apparently uncertain about whether Mar had received her letters she still gave a full account of the family’s difficulties. She changed tack in this letter and stressed the difficult circumstances of her son, ‘who is ruined in his first appearing in the world’, by his father’s lack of finances.¹²⁷ She then informed Mar the Duke of Queensberry had been informed of their situation and was willing to help, this a further spur to Mar. Her final letter was much shorter than the previous ones, lacking in pleasantries and flattery and with a tone of clear disappointment. Lady Sharp admitted she, ‘thot the Queen would have been prevailed with’, to act in Sir William’s favour but she conceded defeat and assured Mar she believed it was not his fault.¹²⁸ By stating this belief she does more to infer Mar’s culpability through refuting it.

Lady Sharp paid due respect to Mar but was purposeful in her attempts to secure favour. She was mindful of her honour and of her responsibility to be a dutiful wife acting in her family’s interest. The diminishing force of her letters illustrate her lessening hope that Mar would bring the family what she believed was their right. Her last resort was the suggestion that Sir William should have, ‘waited on you in London’, but it is doubtful even she believed this for had it been a realistic option then relying on Mar would not have been necessary at all. These letters show a noblewoman defeated in her efforts and worn down by lack of response and this must have been a common consequence of engaging in patronage. With only her family connection and goodwill to reward Mar, the bargaining power of a woman would often be less than sufficient.

¹²⁶ NAS GD124/15/526/3 Margaret, Lady Sharp to Earl of Mar, [Stonyhill] 19 July 1707.

¹²⁷ NAS GD124/15/526/3 Margaret, Lady Sharp to Earl of Mar, [Stonyhill] 19 July 1707.

¹²⁸ NAS GD124/15/526/4 Margaret, Lady Sharp to Earl of Mar, [Stonyhill] 7 August 1707.

Man to Man - Woman to Woman.

As the letters from Lady Forbes and her mother demonstrate, women colluded in writing together to make the strongest case possible. Women also mentioned in their letters the other individuals who had been approached about the same favour or request, again in an attempt to strengthen their appeals but also informing others of their intentions. Lady Margaret Hope wrote two letters on the same issue in September of 1702 sending one to Hamilton and the other to his mother, Duchess Anne. She was protesting to Hamilton about her son's perceived opposition to him and explaining to Duchess Anne of how the Duke had misrepresented her son, Charles, over the matter.¹²⁹ The need to explain to the Duchess, as well as Hamilton, not only demonstrates Lady Hope's intention to become involved in the matter but also indicates her understanding that Duchess Anne already was. More importantly is the inference from this that Duchess Anne was considered by Lady Hope as someone who could favourably influence Hamilton and writing to her was as necessary as writing to him. Duchess Anne's influence over her son was important. Lady Hope's letters illustrate this and Duchess Anne's intervention and influence with her son was certainly sought within the family and also by others. Lord Ogilvie urged his mother to write to Duchess Anne and to, 'desir her Grace may speak to the Duke to countenance me, for his countenance would be of great use to me'.¹³⁰ Ogilvie's request demonstrates that his mother's efforts on his behalf would strengthen his own attempt to gain favour with Hamilton so they sought favour simultaneously.

¹²⁹ NAS GD406/1/4979 Lady Margaret Hope to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, [Tinningham] 23 September 1702; NAS GD406/1/4892 Lady Margaret Hope to Duke of Hamilton, [Tinningham] 25 September 1702.

¹³⁰ Grant, *Seafield Correspondence*, p. 36.

The differences of how men asked for favour in contrast with how women made requests can be seen in two letters sent in 1710. Lord Maitland, the sixth earl of Lauderdale and his mother, Elizabeth, Countess of Lauderdale, made the same request but their letters were sent to different recipients. Maitland wrote to Lord Grange, Mar's brother and his mother wrote to Lord Grange's wife.¹³¹ The letter from Maitland to Grange was short and to the point. Maitland's father had recently died and he wished to secure his father's position in the Mint for himself. Maitland wrote that he, 'would not presume to give you the trouble of this letter', but, 'your Lordship knows my father', while adding rather abruptly above the line already written, 'who is now dead', as an afterthought.¹³² Maitland reminded Grange of his father's respect but added brusquely, 'I being capable to succeed him as general of the mint', he hoped Grange would do him the favour of procuring the position. He briefly assured Grange of his service and completed his short missive without further elaboration. His mother, however, adopted a very different tone in writing to make Lady Grange aware of her son's request. Her letter began by stressing the shock of her husband's death and lingered on details regarding his sickness, fever and death. She lamented the death of, 'one of the best husbands and faithers', but added that it was 'the lords doing'. Lady Lauderdale also stressed her husband's previous service to Grange and hoped that her son would, 'prove a very good man', in this respect also. She continued that it was on her son's behalf that, 'I am now to intreat your lords favour that he wold writ to his brother the Earle of Mar to lett my son succeed his faither in the mint'.¹³³ Her request was much more explicitly made and mentioned both Grange and Mar as necessary to her son's favour.

¹³¹ NAS GD124/15/993 (two letters) Lord Maitland, sixth Earl of Lauderdale to Lord Grange and Elizabeth, Countess of Lauderdale to Rachel, Lady Grange, [Hatton] 14 August, 1710.

¹³² NAS GD124/15/993 (two letters) Lord Maitland, sixth Earl of Lauderdale to Lord Grange and Elizabeth, Countess of Lauderdale to Rachel, Lady Grange, [Hatton] 14 August, 1710.

¹³³ NAS GD124/15/993 (two letters) Lord Maitland, sixth Earl of Lauderdale to Lord Grange and Elizabeth, Countess of Lauderdale to Rachel, Lady Grange, [Hatton] 14 August, 1710.

Lady Lauderdale expressed her gratitude on behalf of the family and assured Lady Grange of their continued service. She was mindful that her haste in making this request after her husband's death was unseemly but excused herself, writing, 'nothing but my constant concerne for this family could [make] me capable just now to think of biseness after such a loss'.¹³⁴ The contrast between the two letters could not be more distinct. The letter from Maitland to Grange was brusque, professional and short with a few necessary references to service and gratitude. His mother's was far more emotional and expressive of deference and her grief.

This dual effort to secure the position for Maitland demonstrates a male and female perspective on patronage. The male request reflects equality, lack of emotion and a professional approach to securing a post. The female request relied on the opposite qualities evoking empathy, modesty and gratitude. His mother's letter was either genuinely anguished or at least making enough reference to their loss to be considered appropriate. The death of her husband had not rendered Lady Lauderdale incapable of writing. It is not inconceivable that she and her son had discussed their two pronged approach and also decided on the differing tones and requirements of each letter. In a bid to make their case they covered, albeit separately, various means of requesting favour. They targeted the possible patrons and referred to another, Mar. Between them they displayed an appropriate acknowledgment of service, gratitude and obligation while excusing themselves from any inappropriateness in writing while recently bereaved. If this request was masterminded by Maitland then he used his mother to cover the angles he alone would or could not. If the request was made at her insistence then she clearly sacrificed her own feelings to ensure her son maintained his status and precedence. Whether such efforts were more successful than the appeals of

¹³⁴ NAS GD124/15/993 (two letters) Lord Maitland, sixth Earl of Lauderdale to Lord Grange and Elizabeth, Countess of Lauderdale to Rachel, Lady Grange, [Hatton] 14 August, 1710.

only one person is difficult to quantify but the letters are evidence that such an approach was certainly a viable means of securing patronage and one that required the participation of women.

Conclusion.

The ability of Scottish noblewomen to pursue patronage and request favour, money and support from those more powerful than themselves is hardly in doubt. In this way they were behaving in a similar way to their English and European contemporaries. While women may have had fewer tangible benefits or incentives to offer prospective patrons there was a clear regard for respect and obligation. The difficulty in discerning between political and non-political patronage stresses the close association between the two. This chapter has shown that isolation from political life in Edinburgh or court life in London was no obstacle to Scots noblewomen who created and maintained large networks of family and friends. The examples show women making requests for money, positions, support and legal assistance as well as being intermediaries and so providing others with a means to secure favour. The patronage networks of this period should not be underestimated as they allowed a distinctly female role to flourish. If we do not expect noblewomen to be achieving much, and so overlook their contribution, then we risk missing what it was they did achieve.¹³⁵ The grey areas between formal and informal political activity of this period were surely just as important to the political process prior to Union as they were in the mid eighteenth century. Yet if it is almost

¹³⁵ E. Ewan, 'A Realm of One's Own? The place of Medieval and Early Modern Women in Scottish History', in T. Brotherstone, D. Simonton and O. Walsh, (eds.) *Gendering Scottish History* (Glasgow, 1999), p. 36.

impossible to separate politics from patronage then the evidence presented her suggests we can no longer separate Scottish noblewomen from the politics of their era.

Chapter 6

Female Political Activity

The letters of noblewomen can reveal how women perceived the political activity of their day and how this impacted on family life. Letters demonstrate female political awareness and related activities rather than exposing noblewomen emulating men or trying to create an alternative female political position equivalent to men's. There was no contemporary understanding of such a formal role for women but female political awareness and influence should be seen as a supplementary, additional aspect of the male dominated politics which prevailed. This activity has yet to be fully recognised and included as a vital part of what constituted male politics in Scotland in this period.

It is impossible to measure male political activity against a female equivalent. The two barely resemble each other and when such attempts have been made they merely reiterate the basic truth that men could engage officially with politics and noblewomen could not. Invariably historians have resorted to imposing contemporary political values and so they inevitably fail to find what is recognisable today as female political influence, involvement or 'activism'. These studies have merit for having examined the political lives of noblewomen but crucially the opportunity to explore what politics actually meant to Scottish noblewomen ca.1700 has been missed.¹ Reaching the

¹ von den Steinen, 'Women's Political Activism', pp. 112-122; Carr, *National Identity and Political Agency*, pp. 108-110.

conclusion that noblewomen were either uninterested or incapable of what was, essentially, male political activity is unreasonable.² Believing it to be a sign of oppression or a failing on the part of women is misleading especially when comparing women to men.³ Even comparing women with women presents difficulties as it was a matter of status and not gender which allowed some noblewomen to exercise greater levels of awareness, involvement and influence.⁴ Reading the sources from a gender perspective to establish the attempts noblewomen made to be included in male politics or determine whether they resented their exclusion from politics is misleading. This does not allow the sources to be read in their broadest sense, exploring equally what noblewomen accepted as much as what they challenged. The sources used here do not suggest that noblewomen lived lives of oppression and disillusion and portraying these women as such would negate the real role that noblewomen had in the political turmoil of the union period.

Revealing Female Political Activity

The previous chapter has shown noblewomen fully exercised their ability to pursue office and pensions and also that they established and maintained useful connections to benefit themselves and the wider family. Patronage and politics are almost impossible to separate but the letters and examples in the previous chapter show noblewomen operating within patronage networks without overt political aims or motivations. The letters and examples in this chapter will demonstrate a far less subtle attitude to politics

² von den Steinen, 'Women's Political Activism', pp. 120-122.

³ Carr's findings are interesting but are essentially obscured by adopting a gender approach which like 'female political activism' is a modern concept, Carr, *National Identity and Political Agency*, pp. 108-110.

⁴ T. A. Meade and M. Wiesner-Hanks (eds.) *A Companion to Gender History* (Oxford, 2006).

and evidence clearly supports the idea that noblewomen directly commented on political events, parties and political issues in an open and acceptable way. Whether reporting news, seeking a position or, in a singular case, having involvement in elections, this chapter will demonstrate how and when noblewomen behaved in the most overtly political manner. Acknowledging that this was acceptable, and even encouraged, allows us to see Scottish noblewomen participating in a form of social politics outlined in the previous chapter and challenges the idea that women, without a formal mandate, had no role in political life.

A letter contained within the edited volume of history and correspondence relating to the Johnstones of Annandale provides an example of a noblewomen using patronage to dual effect. In this example we find a noblewoman, Lady Annandale, seeking a position for her husband and also using the letter to comment on political news and a particular political situation and also to convey her personal political stance. This letter is presented here because unlike letters in the previous chapter the author makes numerous highly political comments, voices her own opinions and as such this letter is not entirely about place seeking.

William Johnstone, first marquis of Annandale (1664-1721) was a notable political player in the union period although he is described as one, ‘who would twist and turn on several occasions between the Revolution and the Union’.⁵ Annandale was related to the leader of the opposition, Hamilton, who was his cousin.⁶ Annandale married Sophia Fairholm (1668-1716) in 1682, the only daughter and heiress of John Fairholm of Craigiehall and Sophia Johnstone. Sophia Johnstone was an aunt of Patrick Hume, earl of Marchmont (1641- 1724) so this made her daughter Sophia a cousin to

⁵ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 27.

⁶ Annandale had been under the care of his mother’s Douglas relatives after the death of his father and then his mother. She was Henrietta Douglas, sister to the William Douglas earl of Selkirk and later third duke of Hamilton after his marriage to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, this made Annandale and the fourth duke cousins, see Fraser, *Annandale, II*, p. ccxiv.

Marchmont, a political contemporary of Annandale's.⁷ As a young man Annandale had initially supported 'the Club', a group which was the driving force behind constitutional and religious change stimulated by the Revolution of 1688, which was led by his brother-in-law, Sir James Montgomerie of Skelmorlie. The Club were disappointed when they failed to persuade King William to increase the power of the Scottish parliament and secret negotiations took place between them and the exiled James VII which meant that Annandale was implicated in what became known as the 'Montgomerie Plot' of 1689 to restore King James.⁸ The *Scots Peerage* states that Annandale gained a pardon over this episode by giving, 'an ample confession, blaming Montgomerie', to Queen Mary but his declaration was noted as being made, 'under the influence of his Countess'.⁹ This is the only information the *Peerage* provides on Lady Annandale's involvement at that time but despite its brevity this suggests a woman with a strong personality and enough influence to have her authority acknowledged. Annandale regained favour thereafter and sought office. In 1693 and 1694 he was created an extraordinary lord of session and a president of the Privy Council. In 1695 he was appointed president of parliament, an office similar to that of speaker in the English House of Commons. In 1698 he hoped for further preferment. The death of Lord Raith meant that a position within the treasury became vacant and both Annandale and his wife wrote to her cousin, the Chancellor of Scotland, Marchmont, to secure his favour in the matter.¹⁰

Annandale wrote to Marchmont on the twenty-ninth of March and on the same day his wife also petitioned her cousin for his favour and patronage. Both letters asked for

⁷ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, II, p. 264.

⁸ D. Adamson, 'Johnstone, William, first marquess of Annandale (1664–1721)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14970>, accessed June 2011]; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 238.

⁹ It is not clear who claimed that she was behind his confession as Lady Annandale is given only scant attention in the family history, see Fraser, *Annandale*, II, pp. ccxiv.

¹⁰ Fraser, *Annandale*, II, pp. 164–166.

the same thing, namely the post of treasurer and a subsequent additional salary to make the position acceptable to Annandale. While these details remained the same in both letters the tone, language and style of Lady Annandale's is indicative both of her political views as well as being illustrative of her personality. Her letter reveals her understanding of the political situation at that time and also reveals something about the motivation for her involvement.

In the opening lines of her letter Lady Annandale referred to 'a small matter' she wished to bring to Marchmont's attention but the whole purpose of the letter was about gaining the post for her husband so in fact this 'small matter' occupied her entire petition.¹¹ She demonstrated her knowledge by outlining how the king operated in his political affairs. She declared that King William would, 'not make the least deficultie', in the matter of Annandale being appointed because she was convinced that it was the king's way, 'when he has done such a harsh thing to a partie', to retrieve the situation by rewarding, 'thos of the contrair'.¹² The 'harsh thing' Lady Annandale referred to lies at the heart of her letter and was a political issue at that time. Tullibardine (later Duke of Atholl) had wanted to secure the post of president of the court of session for his own candidate, Sir William Hamilton of Whitelaw, and had been unsuccessful. The post had been given to Sir Hugh Dalrymple instead, causing some controversy.¹³ At the time of writing her letter Lady Annandale was aware, as were others, that Tullibardine had,

¹¹ Fraser, *Annandale, II*, pp. 165-166.

¹² Fraser, *Annandale, II*, p. 166.

¹³ Sir William Hamilton of Whitelaw was a commissioner to parliament from 1689-1702 and in 1703-1704 for Queensferry having been made a Lord of Session and knighted in 1693. He was promised the office of lord president but, 'for personal and political reasons', Sir Hew Dalrymple was appointed and Whitelaw was, 'driven into opposition in 1698', see Riley, *Union*, p. 21; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 237; Young, *The Parliaments of Scotland, I*, p. 328. Sir Hew Dalrymple was a commissioner to parliament from 1690-1702 and from 1703 until 1707 for North Berwick and was a, 'leading lawyer who believed in the primacy of Scots law over English', which was reflected in his appointment as lord president of the Court of Session in 1698 over Whitelaw. The influence of Queensberry and Argyll secured this position over Hamilton and Tullibardine, Whitelaw's main backers, see Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 237 and Young, *Parliaments of Scotland, I*, pp. 174-175.

‘mett with hard mesuer’, in the affair.¹⁴ Lady Annandale felt that her request for her husband’s appointment as treasurer would be easy to secure as the king liked to, ‘oblige thos of the contrair with soom small things to sweeten the bitter pill’; in this instance the loss of the post of president.¹⁵ Lady Annandale’s grasp of contemporary politics is revealed in her assertion that King William would reward a party by some means after thwarting their intentions in other matters. This approach was often adopted by monarchs who were keen to maintain harmony among political parties as this was paramount to achieving their wider objectives both at home and abroad.¹⁶

While Lady Annandale seized the opportunity to turn this issue to some personal advantage she did not want just anyone within the Country party to benefit. She still felt it necessary to refer directly in the letter to what the king’s usual practise was, as she understood it. Although this would have been generally understood she stated her knowledge of how politics worked to compel Marchmont to act swiftly in the matter. Clearly she saw it as the perfect opportunity to have her husband benefit from being awarded the, ‘small thing to sweeten the bitter pill’.¹⁷

Urging Marchmont to ‘act effectwalie’ Lady Annandale wanted decisive and immediate action. She gave several reasons as to why this was necessary and the most important was the effect of the, ‘blow of losing Whitelaw’, on ‘our partie’. She was correct in seeing this as a blow but it is her language in referring to the Country party as ‘our partie’ which is most revealing.¹⁸ This suggests she considered herself to be part of that group and not merely a bystander or observer. That a noblewoman considered herself part of a political group should not be overlooked in an age where women had no political mandate.

¹⁴ Fraser, *Annandale, II*, pp. 165-166.

¹⁵ Fraser, *Annandale, II*, pp. 165-166

¹⁶ Gregg, *Queen Anne*, pp. 119-129.

¹⁷ Fraser, *Annandale, II*, pp. 165-166.

¹⁸ Fraser, *Annandale, II*, pp. 165-166.

She continued that it was, ‘alwayes nassarie to make the best of business’, and this was the reason she believed, ‘honest men should lay the stress of their credit upon getting some favour conferred upon one of their number’.¹⁹ The use of the term ‘honest men’ was universal at this time and noblewomen used this expression when referring to their menfolk, especially when supporting their adherence to public duty through government or military action.²⁰ It was common political language as each viewed their party as being comprised of ‘honest men’ while the inference was that those of the opposing party were not. Added to this her usage of the words, ‘the stress of their credit’, suggests Lady Annandale was both referring to and appealing to a sense of honour among noblemen with a joint aim. She believed that, ‘thos pipel who are exalted upon this change’, i.e. those who had secured the post of president for Dalrymple, needed to be, ‘keeped in some bounds’.²¹ Her argument reflects the rhetoric of contemporary politics and demonstrates her awareness of political feeling and party loyalty and she conveyed this by reiterating the language used by men. As the party who had lost out at this time her letter’s tone betrays her sense of injustice and conveys the ideal of maintaining a level of honour and balance in the matter of political appointments. Her attitude could be construed as merely supporting Annandale’s opinion which would place her behaviour within acceptable boundaries. However, the way she personally referred to the party and the ‘circumstances of affairs’ suggests she was not merely supporting her husband’s position. A wife writing such a letter with little political familiarity or understanding would struggle to express these views as effectively as Lady Annandale.

¹⁹ Fraser, *Annandale, II*, pp. 165-166.

²⁰ Susan, Lady Yester used the same expression when writing to Lady Katherine about the appointment of Dalrymple instead of Whitelaw, branding his appointment ‘dangerous’ and that ‘all honest men’ would know this, Blair MS 29.I.(10).127 Susan, Lady Yester to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Edinburgh] 23 March 1689.

²¹ Fraser, *Annandale, II*, pp. 165-166.

She urged Marchmont to use his favour on her husband's behalf because, 'if this is nott done our partie will be totalie discouraged or broke.'²² This was possibly an exaggeration to urge Marchmont into action but it is reasonable to suggest that some noblewomen did have a good idea of the general party mood and the wider reaction to events. As female letters seeking patronage have previously shown, noblewomen did not shy away from explicitly stating the worst case scenario in order to make their case and stress the urgency of requests. Lady Annandale did not hold back in her assessment of the state of the party to urge Marchmont to respond quickly. Her next paragraph however shifts from party concerns and her intentions become masked as her personal interests overlapped with the political.

Annandale had stressed in his letter that Marchmont should not only secure the post for him but also raise the pension that went with it by three hundred pounds to bring his salary up to one thousand. This was an increase which he stated would not 'enrich me' but nevertheless he believed it was necessary and compared it as nothing with what Queensberry and Argyll had from the 'public purse'.²³ Annandale's enmity and hatred for these two men has been acknowledged and the rivalries between noble families constantly blur the boundaries between political opposition and personal feuds.²⁴ Lady Annandale similarly pursued the raise in salary but she suggested that, 'some will object that it [the post] is below my lord', and raising the pension would, 'make it more honnorabel'. Like her husband she too set out the figures, compared this to what others received and suggested it was, 'noe unreasonable thing to request'.²⁵ Unlike her husband, Lady Annandale did not name rivals nor did she comment on whether this money was of little consequence to their financial situation but the fact that they both

²² Fraser, *Annandale, II*, pp. 165-166.

²³ Fraser, *Annandale, II*, pp. 164-165.

²⁴ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 27.

²⁵ Fraser, *Annandale, II*, pp. 165-166.

pursued the money suggests its importance. The whole point of securing patronage was to further the prospects of the family and increase wealth and everyone would have known this. This aspect of patronage gives the greatest problems when trying to untangle what motivated nobles in political life: was it money, rivalries or the good of the country?

Attempting to determine what motivated long dead noblemen in their political choices and party preference is fraught with difficulty.²⁶ The political views of wives have rarely been considered at all let alone examined alongside those of their men to gauge whether their motivations can be linked to men's. Lady Annandale's letter demonstrates that the difficulty of unravelling what motivated men is just as complex when examining women but it is possible to discern her central concerns. Although her letter was knowledgeable about current politics, stating her opinion on the situation while also aligning herself with the party, the main point of her letter was about securing a position. Her most revealing line was unambiguous.

Now dear Cussen, pardon this freedome, & belive I wish itt nott
onlie for my own privat intrest, butt for your own & the countries.²⁷

Lady Annandale referred several times in her letter to 'intrest', another universally used term which encompassed myriad family concerns and broadly speaking means the wealth, expansion, prosperity and continuance of a noble line.²⁸ If all of these factors were in place then the influence of such a well positioned, prosperous family increased. In this way the political power of flourishing families was augmented by expanding the

²⁶ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 28-31; Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 112-114; Riley, *Union*, p. 12; Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne*, p. 52.

²⁷ Fraser, *Annandale, II*, pp. 165-166.

²⁸ Holmes, *Politics in the Age of Anne*, pp. 12-16.

family interest and the two, family interest and political power, became symbiotic.²⁹

Lady Annandale's words reveal the importance of her own interest, the equal importance of Marchmont's interest and the impact she perceived this had on the country. She had previously suggested in her letter that if the party was 'discouraged or broke' then, 'one may say your lordships & my Lord Tullibardins intrest will suffer mightily by it'.³⁰ Her reference was not just to their losing their positions, and the related incomes, should the party fail but that they would subsequently lose their influence in politics as well; the two were not separate. This is why female letters about patronage, that is seeking office, pensions or positions, are so difficult to distinguish from politics. Lady Annandale's more explicit political assessments and the language she used to align herself with the party further stress the synthesis between personal interest and political power. This is what her letter best reveals: that noblewomen understood this combination and operated effectively within these parameters.

Lady Annandale offered the services and engagement of her husband to Marchmont in attempting to secure the treasury post. In the typical language of letters requesting favours she reminded her relative of their attachment by referring to him as cousin, stating informally that there, 'will be noe great need of complements betuixt us'.³¹ She further flattered him by suggesting that he alone could secure the post for Annandale and that his influence with the king was greater than Tullibardine's at that time.³² Her assessment of Tullibardine's position again shows her awareness of wider political relationships. Just after her letter to Marchmont was written Tullibardine resigned his post as Secretary of State, in part over the Whitelaw affair, and his

²⁹ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 245; Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 75-81; Holmes, *Politics in the Age of Anne*, pp. 46-52.

³⁰ Fraser, *Annandale, II*, p. 165-166.

³¹ Fraser, *Annandale, II*, pp. 165-166.

³² Annandale was manoeuvring in the background urging Tullibardine to resign over this issue and so his loyalty to Tullibardine was questionable, Fraser, *Annandale, II*, p.167.

relationship with Marchmont deteriorated.³³ Letters to the Countess of Tullibardine about her husband's resignation expressed appropriate commiserations as well as outrage at Marchmont's ingratitude as Tullibardine believed he had been instrumental in securing Marchmont's appointment as chancellor two years before.³⁴ Tullibardine wrote to Annandale on the third of April to announce his resignation but referred to a letter of the twenty-second of March in which Annandale had advised him to resign.³⁵ He wrote that Annandale 'had hinted' that, 'it was your opinion I should lay down', so the news of Tullibardine's resignation would hardly have come as a surprise to Annandale or his wife. Her letter of the twenty-ninth of March openly suggested that Marchmont's influence was greater, an assertion which could be construed as mere flattery. But it is quite likely that just as she was exploiting her relationship to Marchmont in requesting his favour she was also operating in the knowledge that Tullibardine was about to resign.

Lady Annandale did not shy away from including a warning, writing that, 'if this post is refused my lord, I scarce belive he will truble his friends annie more'³⁶ The suggestion that Annandale would withdraw his support for Marchmont if he was not appointed treasurer came in the middle of the letter so her final paragraph, which states Annandale will be the most, 'faithfull frind and servant', softened her threat but it was there nonetheless.

³³ Tullibardine was also in some difficulty with a family matter at this time and was arrested along with his brothers for confronting an associate of Simon Fraser of Beaufort who had abducted and allegedly forcibly married Tullibardine's sister. Marchmont had ordered their arrest which is given as the reason for their relationship becoming difficult, see Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 457; Fraser, *Annandale*, II, pp. 167, Earl of Tullibardine to Marquis of Annandale, 3 April 1698.

³⁴ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 457; Blair MS 29.I.(10).141 Margaret, Countess of Panmure to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Edinburgh] 7 April 1698; Blair MS 29.I.(10).140 Susan, Lady Yester to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Edinburgh] 5 April 1698; Blair MS 29.I.(10).143 Earl of Ruglen to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Minthouse] 9 April 1698; Blair MS 29.I.(10).144, Anne, Duchess of Hamilton to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Hamilton] 10 April 1698; Blair MS 29.I.(10).145 Lord Basil Hamilton to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Hamilton] 11 April 1698; Blair MS 29.I.(10).151 Susan, Lady Yester to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Edinburgh] 14 April 1698.

³⁵ Fraser, *Annandale*, II, p. 167.

³⁶ Fraser, *Annandale*, II, pp. 165-166.

Given that Annandale was so keen to secure this post and also that both he and his wife set out the remuneration required it is unlikely that disengaging from public life was a real option. The political public life of Lady Annandale's husband was, like so many others, fundamentally intertwined with the private interest of the family. Some issues, such as the party outrage over failing to have Whitelaw appointed mattered, not just in themselves but in what could be achieved in the aftermath of such bad fortune. Lady Annandale knew this, referred to it and made her plea for favour in the strongest terms at the right time. Her language and tone do not suggest that she was merely an obedient wife readily contacting a relative in due deference to her husband as her attitude and language were forthright. She placed her own interest alongside the interest of men and saw this joint effort as ultimately benefitting the country. Party and belonging to this group was important, as was duty and concern for the country. There was only an indirect role for her to play both in successfully gaining the post and benefitting from this and similarly she had only an indirect role in the related politics. Lady Annandale did not complain about this, she did not express a wish to address the Whitelaw issue differently nor did she expect to do more than prompt her cousin to act in the matter of a vacant post. That she used the opportunity to own her party, commenting on the way the king conducted political affairs and stating how more disappointment would affect the party, demonstrates further the intrinsic nature of interest and politics.

Very few of Lady Annandale's letters survive and she does not feature significantly in the family history.³⁷ A letter from Annandale to Hamilton written in

³⁷ Noblewomen in the family receive varying degrees of interest in the edited history with noteworthy wives including Mary Scott of Buccleugh and Sara Maxwell. These two were noted for attempting to allay the feuding between the Maxwell and Johnstone families. In comparison Sophia Fairholm was described as 'an attractive heiress' and her wealth greatly improved the family fortunes but her involvement in Annandale's life is surprisingly sketchy given his prominent career, see Fraser, *Annandale, II*, pp. ci- clxv.

1709 referred to domestic troubles. Annandale claimed he was under the, 'greatest perplexities and afflictions', caused by, 'a mad wife, and a rebellious obstinate son, prompted by his mother to the last degree of foolery and madness'.³⁸ His entire letter expressed his unhappiness in his marriage and how he was, 'upon a rack of torments and vexation and never [had] any hours peace at home'.³⁹ Annandale claimed his wife was, 'ten tymes mader now and more unreasonable than she was this tyme twelve months', and although he claimed she would drive her son to, 'utter ruin and near miserie', it was his own misery the letter conveyed most effectively.⁴⁰ This letter suggests their relationship was seriously compromised by this time and her exclusion from the family history appears to bear this out.⁴¹

After 1708 Annandale was a representative peer three times and after refusing to accept the position as Commissioner to the General Assembly in 1712, a post he had undertaken three times previously, he decided to make a tour of the continent and his wife did not accompany him.⁴² Indeed he lived abroad between 1712 and 1714, visiting Spa and attempting to make connections with Sophia, the Electress of Hanover. He was prevented from meeting with her but he did support the Hanoverian succession.⁴³ His wife remained in Scotland and for health reasons resided in England after 1714 until her death in 1716, which meant they were practically estranged for the final four years of her life.⁴⁴ This was the fate of noblewomen whose marriages foundered or who overstepped the boundaries of acceptable behaviour. Not only would they receive

³⁸ NAS GD406/1/5561 Marquis of Annandale to Duke of Hamilton, [Edinburgh] 22 November 1709.

³⁹ NAS GD406/1/5561 Marquis of Annandale to Duke of Hamilton, [Edinburgh] 22 November 1709.

⁴⁰ NAS GD406/1/5561 Marquis of Annandale to Duke of Hamilton, [Edinburgh] 22 November 1709.

⁴¹ No mention of these domestic problems or difficulties with their son feature in the family history, Fraser, *Annandale Family Book*, pp. cciv-cccx. Similar family histories rarely fail to include important information regarding wives but noblewomen who did not behave within acceptable boundaries had much less said about them. For example, Charlotte, the sister of the first duke of Atholl, is mentioned only briefly in the family history after marrying without her father's permission so her existence was acknowledged but her life was not expanded upon, see, Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 330.

⁴² Fraser, *Annandale*, II, pp. ccxiii-ccxiv.

⁴³ Fraser, *Annandale*, II, pp. ccxiii-ccxiv.

⁴⁴ Fraser, *Annandale*, II, p. ccxiv.

condemnation from their husbands in letters like Annandale's to Hamilton they would subsequently find themselves out of favour with the wider family and estranged.⁴⁵

Whether her behaviour really was as Annandale described it the little written evidence which survives suggests Lady Annandale was a noblewoman of independent spirit. Piecing together other evidence of her abilities and activities allows us to see a part of Annandale's life that has so far been overlooked in political histories. Those who have correctly judged him to be undecided in his allegiance, untrustworthy and generally difficult to deal with do not seem to have considered the influence of Lady Annandale. Relating her experience to his general behaviour suggests a private, marital dimension to his actions which may or may not have impacted on his public life. Understanding the private relationships of political men can only augment our understanding of their actions and this marriage appears to have had a negative impact on the family. Neither of his two sons went on to have a career similar to his as the eldest son died unmarried in Naples in 1730 and the second was, 'deemed incapable of managing his affairs', and also died unmarried.⁴⁶

The cause of their eventual separation may never be known but an earlier letter reveals something more of their relationship. In a letter from Annandale to his wife in 1702 he reported that he had been appointed lord Privy Seal and he added as a postscript, 'you know the privie seal is what you have always had in veu [view] and I oune itt is most agreeable to me.'⁴⁷ This comment was a clear acknowledgment from him that Lady Annandale's vision and objectives encouraged him to further his career in ways she deemed beneficial. Just as she had rushed to London to save his reputation

⁴⁵ The abduction and imprisonment of Rachel Chiesly, wife of Lord Grange began with similar letters lamenting his wife's conduct and the effect it had on their children. The behaviour of Lady Grange was deemed 'mad' although upon examination she was reacting to her husband's adultery and his removal of her control of financial and estate matters, Macaulay, *Prisoner of St Kilda*.

⁴⁶ Paul, *Scots Peerage*, I, p. 269.

⁴⁷ Fraser, *Annandale*, II, p. ccxviii.

and honour after the Montgomery Plot, so too, in later years did she pursue office on his behalf and suggest further possibilities for the future. Annandale's letter recognises this distinctly female contribution to his life and admissions such as these, although rare, should alert us to the influence a noble wife could have in male careers and politics. Annandale was notorious for constantly 'shifting his position' and being, 'carried away by his private interest'.⁴⁸ It is reasonable to suggest that if Lady Annandale could sufficiently influence him in striving to attain the post of lord privy seal then she could just as easily prevent him from fulfilling obligations and commitments she decided were not in the family interest. The lack of surviving evidence may prevent us from knowing why they separated but it does not prevent us from gauging something of Lady Annandale's autonomy and ability. Although she has been practically disregarded in relation to Annandale's career there are enough traces of her life left to illustrate her keen political interest, her understanding of state affairs and her definite grasp on the relationship between family interest and political power.

Political Communication

Another single letter, similar to the one written by Lady Annandale, exists in correspondence relating to the Earl of Mar when he was secretary of state for Scotland in 1706 and was written by Mary, Duchess of Queensberry. Mar and his wife were close friends of the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry and this letter has been preserved not because it is a woman's letter but simply because it was written on behalf of her husband and is catalogued as relating to her, 'husband's views as to the

⁴⁸ Fraser cites Lockhart and Mackay when appraising Annandale's character, Fraser, *Annandale, II*, p. cccvi.

nominations of treaters for union'.⁴⁹ No other letters from the Duchess of Queensberry to either Mar or his wife survive in the collection of his papers. However, this single letter, written in January of 1706, is not without significance and it reveals how she communicated with other political operators, expressing her husband's views and possibly her own, while remaining within the boundaries of acceptable female behaviour.

The Duchess opened her letter without the usual formal preamble, stating, 'I am desired by my lord to tel you he forbore writing to your lordhip till he could date it on the road & since then he has not been very well which makes him employ me to lett you know it...'⁵⁰ This deferential language informed the recipient that Queensberry would have written himself and that he knew that he ought to have done so out of courtesy. She also stated that she was writing, 'to clear him [Queensberry] of being in the least accessory to [writing] it himselfe', although he had, 'bein under that scandal but upon my word without any manner of ground'. She further informed him he had, 'not been much disposed to mirth', and, 'did not stay a minute longer at Edinburgh', than family circumstances required.⁵¹ This lengthy opening, written in the most informal language, continued by assuring Mar that she and her husband were, 'making all the haste to you that's possible', and at this point the Duchess lapsed into sociable commentary on the weather, the short days and the dreadful conditions which hindered their journey. The lack of formality in her letter reveals that she was writing to someone she was clearly familiar with and her relaxed style continued throughout. What is interesting in this first paragraph is that there appears to be some issue of when it was appropriate for Queensberry to write, requiring him to, 'date it on the road.' In asking his wife to write

⁴⁹ NAS GD124/15/285 Mary, Duchess of Queensberry to Earl of Mar, [?] 4 January 1706 see also HMC, pp. 244-246.

⁵⁰ NAS GD124/15/285 Mary, Duchess of Queensberry to Earl of Mar, [?] 4 January 1706

⁵¹ NAS GD124/15/285 Mary, Duchess of Queensberry to Earl of Mar, [?] 4 January 1706

so that he was not an ‘accessory’ to it there appears to be an implication that he should not perhaps have been contacting Mar at that time although the reason for this is not stated.

Queensberry’s career had undergone rehabilitation in 1705 after he had been removed from the post of high commissioner to the Scottish parliament in 1704 due to being implicated in the ‘Scotch Plot’.⁵² Queensberry had been involved with Simon Fraser, a political charlatan and enemy of the Murrays of Atholl, who implicated Queensberry’s main Scottish rivals, including Atholl, in a supposed plot to co-ordinate a Jacobite rising. Queensberry, thinking to use this situation to his own advantage, informed the queen of the conspiracy but Atholl heard of the plot and submitted a memorial to Queen Anne successfully exposing the scheme against him. Queensberry had been high commissioner to the Scottish parliament until 1704 and was forced to leave office over this issue and the Marquis of Tweeddale replaced him.⁵³ Those who opposed Queensberry’s administration saw him gradually regain his position as his strength in Scotland was too great to be ignored, but letters between the Hamilton and Atholl families and their associates illustrate their distrust of him.⁵⁴ A letter from the Earl of Home to the Duke of Hamilton in 1705 declared that Queensberry would have

⁵² Paul, *Scots Peerage, VII*, pp. 138-143; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 211; J. R. Young, ‘Douglas, James, second duke of Queensberry and first duke of Dover (1662-1711), Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford, 2004), [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7987 accessed June 2011].

⁵³ The Scotch Plot was a complex issue and historians agree that Queensberry, while not the instigator, failed to behave responsibly and his actions, ‘worsened relations between magnate families at a crucial time in Scottish history’, see Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 211 and Riley, *Union*, p. 61.

⁵⁴ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 230-231; NAS GD406/1/7229 Earl of Selkirk to Duke of Hamilton, [Hamilton] 17 April 1704 hoping Queensberry’s villainies may be discovered; NAS GD406/1/7047 Duke of Atholl to Duke of Hamilton, [London] 6 April 1704 wishing to ‘open the eyes of the Court to the duke of Queensberry’; NAS GD406/1/7839 Duke of Hamilton to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, [Kinneil] 14 December 1703 stating that Atholl is on very bad terms with Queensberry over Simon Fraser. One letter suggests that the animosity between Queensberry and Hamilton was lengthy and that this concerned women in the wider family is found in a letter from Katherine, Viscountess Ranelagh to Duchess Anne, urging her to help heal the breach between the two families. Viscountess Ranelagh was a great aunt of Mary, Duchess of Queensberry and the letter must have been written before 1691, the year of her death, NAS GD406/1/10719, Katherine, Viscountess Ranelagh to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, [?] N.D.

them, ‘eternally slaved to England’.⁵⁵ This reference ties in with other contemporary judgments on Queensberry who has been called the ‘union duke’ and it is acknowledged that he, ‘successfully steered the Scottish Parliament to union in 1706 and 1707’.⁵⁶

Home’s letter also suggests that Queensberry was, ‘in concert with the two secretaries’, and so ‘great vigilance’⁵⁷ was necessary and this brief comment sheds some light on the Duchess’ letter to Mar. Her letter was addressed to Mar but she also insisted that anything included in the letter was directed, ‘the same to my lord Loudoun’.⁵⁸ These two, Hugh Campbell, third earl of Loudoun (d1731) and Mar, were both commissioners and joint secretaries of state throughout the negotiations of 1706. Loudoun had been joint secretary with Annandale from 1704 and Mar was appointed, replacing Annandale, in September 1705.⁵⁹ Home’s letter was written in 1705 so could not have been referring to Mar and Loudoun but could have meant Loudoun and Annandale. If Queensberry’s rivals were concerned by his ability to influence and manage the union commissioners, which included the secretaries, then this might explain Queensberry’s wish to avert, ‘bein under the scandal’, of writing to Mar and Loudoun injudiciously. This issue was circumvented by allowing his wife to do so and not only did she undertake this task she defended her right to do so, excusing her husband on health and family matters. It is quite possible she set out the various reasons in such detail to adequately inform Mar and Loudoun of the particulars and so ensure their discretion.

⁵⁵ NAS GD406/1/5300 Earl of Home to Duke of Hamilton, [Edinburgh] 22 June 1705.

⁵⁶ Young, ‘Queensberry’, [<http://www.oxforddnb/view/article/7897>]; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp.32-33.

⁵⁷ NAS GD406/1/5300 Earl of Home to Duke of Hamilton, [Edinburgh] 22 June 1705.

⁵⁸ NAS GD124/15/285 Mary, Duchess of Queensberry to Earl of Mar, [?] 4 January 1706.

⁵⁹ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 235.

The main thrust of the letter was to reassure Mar that Queensberry stood by a, ‘memorial sent up by him & all your friends’, on the issue of the nominations of commissioners for the union negotiations.⁶⁰ Thirty-one commissioners were to be appointed to negotiate the treaty and in September of 1705 Hamilton had betrayed his own party by being the person who proposed that Queen Anne should appoint the commissioners instead of the Scottish Parliament.⁶¹ The selection of commissioners was crucial as the Scottish Parliament wished to treat for a union so the commissioners chosen had to reflect the requirements of parliament. Being represented by commissioners with no interest in union was a waste of time as the negotiations would have failed immediately although a balance had to be found as many Scots believed that those nominated would, ‘serve only English interests.’⁶² The idea that the commissioners were, ‘betrayers of Scotland steered by Queensberry into meek acceptance of their English counterparts demands’, has persisted. Queensberry had to approve the list of those chosen but he was not solely responsible for the choice and it was not quite the ‘Queensberry monopoly’ that has been claimed.⁶³

In her letter to Mar the Duchess had grasped all of this and correctly stated that, ‘if any mixture be made in the treaty or ministry the whole design will be ruin’d’, and that it will be, ‘impossible to carry [at this time] any kind of business with a jumble’.⁶⁴ She wrote that Queensberry believed that anyone who was against this should, ‘give their opinion once’, and then, ‘submit in obedience but be altogether passive and let them

⁶⁰ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 235.

⁶¹ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 233; Mar had reported this to his wife at the time and had stated Hamilton’s actions, ‘had made his partie mad’, NAS GD124/15/231/16 Earl of Mar to Margaret, Countess of Mar, and [Edinburgh] 7 September 1705.

⁶² Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 234.

⁶³ Riley asserts that the commission was, ‘almost entirely a Queensberry monopoly’, although he concedes some inclusions which Queensberry had to tolerate but Whatley sets out evidence that suggests it is too simplistic to view the commission as a monopoly which Queensberry had full control over, see Riley, *Union*, pp. 175-177 and Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 234-239.

⁶⁴ NAS GD124/15/285 Mary, Duchess of Queensberry to Earl of Mar, [?] 4 January 1706.

that advise it answer for the effects'.⁶⁵ The Duchess continued in a guarded manner to suggest that Queensberry was aware of divisions among the opposing parties but added, 'he [Queensberry] will explain to you at meeting'. She further claimed her husband, 'bids me tell you as a friend...he will carry him selfe allways very dutifully to the queen in any station she pleases to employ him or whither she employ him or not', and that he was, 'resolved not to meddle or advise and in that case shall wish that he had bin allow'd to stay at home'.⁶⁶ Queensberry had been instructed by Queen Anne to secure the ratification of the treaty and there was significant pressure on him to do so.⁶⁷

That the Duchess wrote this letter at all demonstrates something about what was expected of the wife of an important parliamentarian. The letter does not read as one that had been dictated as she opened with relative informality, added some news and commented on the slow progress of their journey.⁶⁸ She stated Queensberry's views on the nominations and both opened and closed her letter with deference and polite assurances of Queensberry's honour and service to both Queen and country. The letter could be one that Queensberry did not have time to write himself but he instructed his wife to do so on his behalf despite having a secretary, William Stewart.⁶⁹ The informality of her language and tone suggests that her letter was continuing an ongoing discussion, a conversation that she was part of, just as the men were. The Duchess could write swiftly and independently about these matters because she knew her husband's views and position. Noblewomen who could fulfil this role appear to be expressing someone else's views or opinions but such letters reveal more than women acting as scribes. Her letter also contains a great deal on the commissioners so it was more than

⁶⁵ NAS GD124/15/285 Mary, Duchess of Queensberry to Earl of Mar, [?] 4 January 1706.

⁶⁶ NAS GD124/15/285 Mary, Duchess of Queensberry to Earl of Mar, [?] 4 January 1706.

⁶⁷ Young, 'Queensberry' [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7897>]; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 7

⁶⁸ NAS GD124/15/285 Mary, Duchess of Queensberry to Earl of Mar, [?] 4 January 1706.

⁶⁹ NAS GD124/15/293 William Stewart, on behalf of Duke of Queensberry to Earl of Mar, [York] 14 January 1706.

just a courtesy: why bother with more than a short missive if there was nothing important to convey? Queensberry did have something to convey but for whatever reason did not write himself. The Duchess stressed that she had been ‘employed’ and ‘desired’ by her husband to write and in her final line she noted, ‘I shall not take it ill if the answer of this be directed to the principall party and not to the secretary’.⁷⁰

This letter does reflect the concerns many had over the nominations. If the list of commissioners were all handpicked by Queensberry and so under his control why would she express worries over an inability to ‘carry any kind of business’? Suggesting, as the Duchess did in her letter, that those who opposed the choices should ‘submit in obedience’ might concur with the view that Queensberry was trying to manage the situation but it does not suggest his complete control over it.⁷¹ The Duchess also referred to worries over a ‘mixture’ or ‘jumble’ in Scottish business and the threat that the, ‘whole design will be ruin’d’, and this appears to be presented in her own style and language. Her letter indicates that there was no certain acceptance of steering the chosen commissioners in a particular way and the Duchess was articulating grave concerns on how the negotiations would proceed.

Her letter suggests that the wife of a prominent politician could expect to relay his views in her own words and with her own understanding, on any situation. She also, subtly, expressed his worries over managing the task ahead and her involvement with their political friends was another important aspect of how he communicated both his intentions and his concerns. Queensberry would go on to successfully manage the negotiations, deliver Union to Queen Anne and enjoy the triumph of his achievement

⁷⁰ NAS GD124/15/285 Mary, Duchess of Queensberry to Earl of Mar, [?] 4 January 1706.

⁷¹ Whatley argues that too many historians have repeated this view without fully appreciating Queensberry’s role, Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 234; Riley, *Union*, pp. 175-177.

which saw him well rewarded financially and become the Duke of Dover in 1708.⁷²

None of this was guaranteed in January of 1706. The duchess was not merely the scribe or secretary no matter that she chose to portray herself as such. Reliable, discreet and deferential she was also accurate, informed and trusted. The perfect conduit to channel both tangible news and intelligence and also convey the deeper worries and concerns which did not require explicit expression.

Politicised Noblewomen

Some noblewomen participated more fully than others in political affairs. Anne, duchess of Hamilton was particularly politicised both in Lanarkshire in the Hamilton estates and also in the encouragement and guidance she gave to her children. All of her sons became politically active and her three daughters were also, although to varying degrees, politically motivated and active.⁷³ The noblewomen studied so far in this chapter have provided evidence of noblewomen's political knowledge and understanding in their roles as advisor, confidante or reporter. In some cases noblewomen subtly pursued political aims through patronage or in maintaining connections and ties of kin. Yet other noblewomen were engaged in more overt political activity and the role of Katherine, Duchess of Atholl, in the elections of 1702 provides a remarkable example of this.

⁷² Young, 'Queensberry', [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7897>]; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 32.

⁷³ von den Steinen, *Women's Political Activism*, pp. 112-122; Carr, *National Identity and Political Agency*, pp. 73-115,

Studies on electioneering in England in the mid 1700s have shown that noblewomen involved themselves in social politics, effectively combining the role of advisor and confidant with discernible influence and autonomy in the political sphere.⁷⁴ The activities they undertook ranged from organising and hosting social events, allowing political discourse and ideas to flourish, to writing letters of support and seeking political patronage. Some noblewomen even took to the streets in election campaigns, actively promoting political candidates and parties.⁷⁵ The loss of the Scottish Parliament in 1707 has meant that studies on elite women's involvement in politics in the eighteenth century have been, essentially, about English noblewomen. The number of Scottish peers was reduced to sixteen after the Union and while Scots nobles were certainly representing Scottish interests any studies dealing with the period after 1707 relate to British politics, as the parliament at Westminster became after union.⁷⁶

Tracing the broader development of female political activity in Britain requires an examination of pre union Scotland to both augment current knowledge and understanding of this period and to illuminate how female political activity was shaped in the later period. Sources relating to Lady Katherine from the year 1702 show that she was actively involved in efforts to have a member of the Murray of Atholl family represent either the town of Perth or Falkland in the Scottish parliament. Her correspondence reveals what she attempted to do locally, how she managed the affair in the absence of her husband and how she circumvented social constraints. It is also possible to gauge how much support she had in her activities, how successful she was and whether her behaviour was understood and tolerated by others.

⁷⁴ Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 156-171.

⁷⁵ Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 170-171

⁷⁶ Young, *Parliaments of Scotland*, p. xiv-xix; Holmes, *Making of a Great Power*, pp. 307-321.

The Revolution Parliament of 1689 was adjourned following the death of King William in March 1702.⁷⁷ The procedures for calling the Scottish Parliament in the event of the monarch's death had been set out in an Act of Security of 1696 but this legislation was not adhered to. The Scottish Parliament did not begin its deliberations until three months after the king's death, rather than within twenty days as the 1696 act stipulated. Declaring this delay as unconstitutional, Hamilton staged a walk out in protest at the legitimacy of the proceedings. However, a majority 'rump' parliament remained and although it passed the necessary legislation Queensberry was forced to adjourn the session and elections were eventually called at the instigation of Lord Godolphin in London. The political issues in Scotland on the accession of Queen Anne meant the elections of 1702 'unleashed party politics' which had declined under William due to his lack of interest and general lack of attention to Scotland.⁷⁸ The infrequency of elections meant that there was a massive interest in those called in 1702 with party and political debate being reinvigorated. This was the first opportunity for a, 'genuine trial of strength', between opposing parties.⁷⁹

Political historians agree that, 'relatively little is known about electoral politics in Scotland either before or after the Union'.⁸⁰ The reasons compelling a man to give his vote to one or other of the parties could be based on political ideas, kinship, family, and some other form of obligation or more likely a combination of these. What noblemen hoped to achieve in these elections was to have associates or relations placed as representatives thus boosting party numbers and giving them much needed allies in

⁷⁷ K. M. Brown, 'Party Politics and Parliament, Scotland's last Election and its Aftermath, 1702-3', in K. M. Brown and A. J. Mann (eds.), *Parliament and Politics in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2005), pp. 245-286.

⁷⁸ Brown, 'Party Politics', p. 246; The attitude of both King William and Queen Anne to political parties was one of regarding them as a 'necessary evil' and neither monarch wished to become dependent on one party, William was thwarted by the Scottish Parliament and showed little direct interest in Scottish affairs, see G. Holmes, *The Making of a Great Power, Late Stuart and early Georgian Britain 1660-1722* (Harlow, 1993), pp. 308-309 and 322; Riley, *Union*, p. 31.

⁷⁹ Brown, 'Party Politics', p. 256.

⁸⁰ Brown, 'Party Politics', p. 255.

parliament. One example of this political manoeuvring is provided by Sir John Clerk of Penicuik's son writing to his father urging him to stand for parliament. The younger Penicuik suggested his father was well qualified to, 'serve the Presbyterian interest', but the methods he described for gaining a seat were less 'high minded'.⁸¹ These involved his father buying property in Tweeddale to secure his election and Penicuik himself was sure of his own selection for Whithorn because his father-in-law, the third earl of Galloway, had the greatest interest there.⁸² Serving the country was commendable but gaining a seat could require dubious methods although these techniques were not necessarily considered questionable by contemporaries.

Those nobles with a large territorial powerbase could effectively control the towns within their lands and have their choice of representative elected.⁸³ This was what Penicuik was suggesting when he wrote to his father because the Earl of Galloway was in a position to ensure that he, as Galloway's son-in-law, could represent Whithorn.⁸⁴ The 'stranglehold of patronage' that the Duke of Argyll held meant the elections in Argyllshire were unlikely to be contested and similarly the Hamilton interests in Lanarkshire were managed by the Earl of Selkirk and his mother, Duchess Anne, and her choice of representatives proved to be the successful candidates.⁸⁵ The Murrays of Atholl were significant landowners but do not appear to have been so fortunate and did not seem to have either their local town of Perth or Falkland, which was also within their lands, under their control. The relationship between landowning families and the

⁸¹ Brown, 'Party Politics', p. 255.

⁸² Brown, 'Party Politics', p. 255. p. 255; Sir John Clerk of Penicuik was a commissioner to parliament between 1690 and 1702 for Edinburghshire which suggests he did not take his son's advice or was unsuccessful. John Penicuik, his son, did represent Whithorn as a commissioner to parliament between 1703 and 1707; see Young, *The Parliaments of Scotland*, I, pp. 123-124.

⁸³ Terry outlines the history of parliament and the composition and electoral process, see C. S. Terry, *The Scottish Parliament: Its Constitution and Procedures* (Glasgow, 1905), pp. 1-10. Terry sets out the details on what constituted noble rights which were recognised legally in 1689 allowing that nobles were summoned to parliament by 'birth, blood or inheritance and if they were in possession of 10,000 merks per annum' see Terry, *The Scottish Parliament*, pp. 12-13; Young, *Parliaments of Scotland*, p. xvii.

⁸⁴ Young, *Parliaments of Scotland*, p. 124.

⁸⁵ Brown, 'Party Politics', p. 255-257.

towns can be revealed in following the events as far as possible through the Atholl correspondence relating to the elections in 1702. This episode not only illuminates the differing associations between towns and their local nobility it also illustrates what nobles hoped to achieve in the elections. In the present context it demonstrates the activity of noblewomen in pursuing these wider political aims. This episode reveals how they operated locally and dealt with the election process firsthand, a process which, on the surface, women did not participate in.

The Events Leading to Elections.

Letters concerning the death of King William and the accession of Queen Anne in 1702 illustrate the concerns of the Murray of Atholl family at this time. Lady Katherine received letters from her brother, Orkney, in March 1702 reporting on the condition of the king as his health deteriorated after falling from his horse.⁸⁶ Orkney provided details on the king's condition and reported on speculation that the king would not live long but his letter was mostly about how this affected his own position. Orkney's wife, Lady Elizabeth Villiers, had been granted Irish estates in 1695 which they had discovered would revert to the crown on the death of the king.⁸⁷ Orkney wrote 'I am undone' and admitted, 'the affair of the Irish estates was in a good way', but that, 'it is out of doing now'.⁸⁸ He lamented that he had, 'lost his subsistence and my all', and wrote similarly to Tullibardine that the death of the king had left them without resources.⁸⁹ Orkney wrote frequently to Lady Katherine, keeping her up to date with his news and informing her of his financial problems and this was done in the hope of gaining the support of the

⁸⁶ Gregg, *Queen Anne*, pp. 128-129; Blair MS 45.(2).72 Earl of Orkney to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Kensington] 7 March 1702.

⁸⁷ Princess Anne had been angered to find her brother-in-law William had granted the Irish estates of James II to Elizabeth Villiers in 1695 after the death of Queen Mary without considering that she herself was heir to James II, Gregg, *Queen Anne*, pp. 74-75, 105, 113.

⁸⁸ Gregg, *Queen Anne*, pp. 74-75, 105, 113.

⁸⁹ Blair MS 45.(2).75 Earl of Orkney to Earl of Tullibardine, [London] 12 March 1702.

wider family. He knew she would inform her husband but he also wrote to Tullibardine as well.

As well as addressing this financial problem within the family there was also the problem of deciding whether to go immediately to London.⁹⁰ Lady Katherine's other brother, Selkirk, wrote to Tullibardine informing him that the, 'question at present at Court is whether a new parliament or not will be probable', and asking his advice.⁹¹ These letters illustrate the family's broader discussions on important matters and how to react to them as a family unit. Lady Katherine was the person who united all of these men and the fact that they wrote to their sister to inform her was not just about passing on news. They valued her advice and support and used her as the means to connect with Tullibardine indirectly. Lady Katherine agreed that her husband should go to London although she was pregnant and did not accompany him.⁹²

Lady Katherine reported from Scotland on what others were doing, as not all nobles made the journey south. She reported that she could not tell him, 'the multitude of storys of changes that are talked off', because she believed, 'not a word of them'. She was referring here to changes in posts or office which were frequently the subject of speculation. She also informed him that, 'those that are of the contrary party calls their friends the great friends and you that are gone up [to London] now the great fools'.⁹³ Lady Katherine was aware of the reaction to her husband's decision to go to London and the family's Episcopalianism would have further fuelled speculation on Tullibardine's motives. A letter from Lady Katherine to Tullibardine hinted that his parents, firm Episcopals, were, 'making many enquiries of him', which she would

⁹⁰ Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 493.

⁹¹ Blair MS 45.(2).74 Earl of Selkirk to Earl of Tullibardine [London] 10 March 1702.

⁹² Lady Katherine had a baby girl on April 24th, Blair MS 45.(2).116 Margaret, Countess of Panmure to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 25 April 1702; Blair MS 45.(2).82 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 28 March 1702.

⁹³ Blair MS 45.(2).108 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 20 April 1702.

not answer in writing and several letters at this time refer to her worries over their mail being opened.⁹⁴ Queen Anne's enthusiasm for the protestant faith did not necessarily mean securing Presbyterian Church Government and the succession of Anne, directly descended from Charles I, 'warmed the hearts of non-juring Episcopalians', who expected a great deal from their new monarch.⁹⁵ Tullibardine's parents and other members were Episcopalian, and in many cases had Jacobite loyalties, and these family members could have been counted among those with different expectations of Queen Anne. Their opinions would have been sharply at odds with staunch Presbyterians like Lady Katherine and her husband.⁹⁶ The reactions to Tullibardine going to London to pay respects to the new queen would have been questioning his motives for doing so and also commenting on the futile attempts of those that did go to petition Queen Anne for elections.⁹⁷ Lady Katherine never shied away from informing him of what was being said in his absence but always included her swift retorts to such gossip. In this manner she rebuffed criticism as it reached him, encouraging him to remain firm to their Presbyterian principles and so working to maintain their position.

Elections were another area where Lady Katherine reliably informed her husband about current events. Writing in April of 1702 she intimated, 'you'll hear before this that Grinouck [Greenock]⁹⁸ is dead so there will be a new election for Stirlingshire

⁹⁴ Blair MS 45.(2).112 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 21 April 1702; Blair MS 45/2/92 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 9 April 1702 and Blair MS 45.(2).108 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 20 April 1702.

⁹⁵ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, pp. 206-207; Upon Anne's accession her advisors and new ministers, 'looked benignly on Scottish Episcopalians and wanted elections so the Episcopalian voice in Scotland could be heard', see Riley, *Union*, pp. 31-32.

⁹⁶ Tullibardine was accused of wavering in his Presbyterianism with family letters suggesting his conduct meant he was 'taken for a Jacobite'; see NAS GD406/1/7292 Earl of Orkney to Duke of Hamilton, [London] 29 December 1703. Episcopalianism and Jacobitism within the family appears to have been tolerated as noble families often found it prudent to cover themselves in matters of allegiance, never knowing which monarch would prevail, showing loyalty to both ensured the survival of the family.

⁹⁷ The edited family history states this was Tullibardine's intention on going to London after the death of King William, Atholl, *Chronicles*, I, p. 493.

⁹⁸ Sir John Shaw of Greenock, Commissioner to Parliament 1700-1701 for Stirlingshire, he was a tacksman of the Customs and Excise 1692-94 and a Commissioner of Supply 1696 and 1702, voted for

which I doubt will not goe the better that you are not at home'.⁹⁹ Conceding that his influence was needed locally was not just a form of flattery and Lady Katherine knew that her husband's presence was far more likely to achieve greater success than her presence in his stead. Throughout her activity in the Perth elections this was a sentiment she often repeated although his absence never prevented her from participating as fully as she could.

Tullibardine had obviously discussed with his wife what he had learned in London regarding a proposed union as Lady Katherine was forthright in disagreeing with his opinion on this. She wrote, 'I cannot bring my selfe to believe what I find you doe that any English are serious for an union with Scotland on any honourable or good terms for us'. She continued that she was, 'really very hard of faith in it', and hoped that God would, 'guide any that are to be concerned in it for I think it a very weighty matter'.¹⁰⁰ This is the kind of remark which has confirmed Lady Katherine's opposition to union and also that this was informed by her religion. It is further evidence of the encouragement she gave her husband which has also been acknowledged by historians as 'prodding' Tullibardine to opposition.¹⁰¹ This letter indicates that while she understood his attempts to 'doe some good' in London she also freely expressed her views, even when they conflicted with his. Lady Katherine had a seriously devout nature so connecting her opinions on union to her faith would impress in her husband's mind that this was not something that she could be easily dissuaded from. Her religious journal was testimony to the strength of her religiosity and her letters to her husband

an act to declare Caledonia a lawful colony. Died April 1702. See Young, *Parliaments of Scotland, II*, p. 633.

⁹⁹ Blair MS 45.(2).114 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 23 April 1702.

¹⁰⁰ Blair MS 45.(2).114 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 23 April 1702

¹⁰¹ Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 35 ; von den Steinen, 'Women's Political Activism', p. 122; Mullan, *Life Writing*, pp. 358-361.

were equally full of religious sentiment backing his participation in public affairs. By stating that her opinion on union was informed by faith she was expressing to her husband that nothing would change her views.

Further letters follow the chronology of events with gossip about appointments to positions and offices being exchanged among the women in the family as well as letters of support for Tullibardine's efforts in London.¹⁰² News in May that Queensberry was, 'laying in provisions for the parliament', and that among, 'the rest is five tunns of French wine',¹⁰³ was enough to convince Lady Panmure that the parliament was not likely to be adjourned quickly. In a letter of the tenth of June Patrick Scott, Tullibardine's secretary, sent a detailed account to Lady Katherine of the events of the day that parliament met.¹⁰⁴ He outlined that Hamilton and his party, 'backt by a great number of the gentrie from the shires', had taken their places and waited for the Commissioner, Queensberry, to arrive.¹⁰⁵ Hamilton had then, 'made a discourse...introducing his dissent', and when he concluded 'he took leave' with the rest of the dissenters. Scott informed Lady Katherine her brother Selkirk had also walked out and that, 'the court party faces did a little change', but they recovered themselves and managed to return to business. It may have been gratifying for her to know her husband and brothers were so involved in opposing unconstitutional behaviour. It must have been equally worrying

¹⁰² Blair MS 45.(2).129 Margaret, Lady Nairne, to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [?] [n.d.] May 1702; Blair MS 45.(2).124 Margaret, Lady Nairne, to Katherine Countess of Tullibardine, [Nairne] 6 May 1702; Blair MS 45.(2).130 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Hamilton] 11 May 1702; Blair MS 45.(2).131 Margaret, Countess of Panmure, to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Breachin Castle] 12 May 1702; and Blair MS 45.(2).132 Susan, Lady Yester, to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Dalgaty] 19 May 1702.

¹⁰³ Blair MS 45.(2).131 Margaret, Countess of Panmure to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Breachin Castle] 12 May 1702.

¹⁰⁴ Parliament met on the ninth of June 1702. Blair MS 45.(2).137 Patrick Scott to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Edinburgh] 10 June 1702.

¹⁰⁵ Blair MS 45.(2).137 Patrick Scott to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Edinburgh] 10 June 1702.

for Lady Katherine to read that Queen Anne wanted commissioners chosen to negotiate a union as, 'the English wer never more disposed for it than at this time'.¹⁰⁶

Hamilton's departure left 'a majority rump' parliament essentially handing control to those that remained without them having to do anything.¹⁰⁷ The parliament, as it was, pressed on, confirming Anne's right to the crown, securing the Protestant religion and the Presbyterian form of church government and declaring the parliament lawful.¹⁰⁸ Although doubts about the legality of the parliament remained, a second draft of an act of union had been read and approved and taxation had been agreed for the defence of the country. A dangerous split occurred over a proposed act abjuring the Stuart Pretender. This revealed the divisions in the remaining parties and well as the personal conflicts between the main players, Queensberry and Marchmont. The parliament was finally adjourned in August 1702.¹⁰⁹ Queensberry had failed to do all Queen Anne had requested of the Scottish Parliament and the decision to call elections was made at London, a move which, 'plunged Scotland into intense party politics'.¹¹⁰

The Atholl Candidate.

In July of 1702 Duchess Anne wrote to her daughter and informed her that she had written to Hamilton, her son, requesting that he come north to take the opportunity to speak personally with local people before the forthcoming elections.¹¹¹ She commented

¹⁰⁶ Blair MS 45.(2).137 Patrick Scott to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Edinburgh] 10 June 1702.

¹⁰⁷ Brown, 'Party Politics', p. 250.

¹⁰⁸ Brown, 'Party Politics', p. 250; Riley, *Union*, pp. 32-36; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 208; Holmes, *Making of a Great Power*, p. 309.

¹⁰⁹ Brown, 'Party Politics', p. 255; Riley, *Union*, p. 37; Gregg, *Queen Anne*, pp. 130-131; Holmes, *Making of a Great Power*, p. 322; Whatley, *Scots and Union*, p. 208.

¹¹⁰ Brown, 'Party Politics', p. 286.

¹¹¹ Blair MS 42.(2).154 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Hamilton] 30 July 1702.

that, 'there is great pains taking by several influenced by the court party', to gain local support so she hoped the Duke's wife would not prevent him from coming home to combat the court's influence on the potential candidates.¹¹² Hamilton was not averse to using his wife as an excuse to avoid his mother's summons but it is interesting to note that the young duchess was considered to have enough influence to prevent him from attending to Hamilton business.¹¹³ The Marchioness of Atholl was employed in much the same way, writing to her son, Tullibardine, and requesting that he visit Blair to discuss the elections with her.¹¹⁴ The matriarchs of both families clearly understood the influence their sons could have through personal attendance and lost no time in reminding them of their duty.

Tullibardine wrote to the fourth marquis of Montrose in August to inform him that he, as well as Hamilton and Tweeddale, had been summoned to 'attend the queen'.¹¹⁵ He hoped to meet with Montrose before he left to, 'lay down such measure as that the elections may goe right in this shire', and informed him that he expected some other, 'gentlemen here that day to discourse about them'.¹¹⁶ By September he had instructed the Sheriff Depute of Perthshire on the procedure for calling the elections in his absence and was on his way south.¹¹⁷ His father wrote to him that he had received a letter from Lady Katherine with the, 'account of my lord Montrose & thirty gentlemen besides dining with you', and said he, 'approved of the measures you have taken', but did not state what these were.¹¹⁸ This letter reveals that Tullibardine entertained a significant

¹¹² Blair MS 42.(2).154 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Hamilton] 30 July 1702.

¹¹³ Hamilton wrote to his wife to explain his motive for heading north in 1702 was to see her and the children when in fact it was to avoid being at Court, he suggested she 'give out' the same story if asked, NAS GD406/1/7132 Duke of Hamilton to Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton, [Kendall] 12 March 1702.

¹¹⁴ Blair MS 45.(2).157 Amelia, Marchioness of Atholl to Earl of Tullibardine, [Blair] 4 August 1702.

¹¹⁵ Blair MS 45.(2).174 Earl of Tullibardine to Marquis of Montrose, [Huntingtower] 28 August 1702.

¹¹⁶ Blair MS 45.(2).174 Earl of Tullibardine to Marquis of Montrose, [Huntingtower] 28 August 1702.

¹¹⁷ Blair MS 45.(2).183 Earl of Tullibardine to Sheriff Depute of Perthshire, [Haddington] 15 September 1702.

¹¹⁸ Blair MS 45.(2).184 Marquis of Atholl to Earl of Tullibardine, [Blair] 15 September 1702.

number of local men with Montrose on the eve of local elections and as Lady Katherine provided her father-in-law with an account of that event this would suggest her full participation on this occasion. Tullibardine arranging to meet with local men to engage their interest and ensure their support would have been quite usual and this was exactly what both Duchess Anne and the Marchioness of Atholl expected of their sons. The participation of their wives was obviously something that was equally acceptable and welcome. Duchess Anne's letter to Lady Katherine included the promise of a warm welcome at Hamilton for the duke's wife and the Marquis of Atholl pledged his support for Lady Katherine writing that he 'would goe to my daughter at Huntingtower and doe all I can.'¹¹⁹ These letters provide evidence that mothers reminded their sons of their role in local politics and also reveal that there was an expectation that noblewomen would participate, mothers in this case advising and wives by attending.

Scottish noblewomen acting as hostesses at these kinds of occasions were not unusual although details on these activities are difficult to find and rarely feature within correspondence. Duchess Anne entertained political and religious men regularly and her household accounts show carefully considered guest lists, including both family and prominent people.¹²⁰ When Marchmont became chancellor in 1696 his wife was noted for her entertaining and her careful management of invited guests. It was her attention to detail which allowed them to successfully manage the delicate balance between those who had to be entertained and those he wished to have as company for his own political and career reasons.¹²¹ In the later eighteenth century a hugely important role for English noblewomen was as a society hostess, giving parties and private dinners and managing

¹¹⁹ Blair MS 45.(2).154 Duchess Anne to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Hamilton] 30 July 1702; Blair MS 45.(2).184 Marquis of Atholl to Earl of Tullibardine, [Blair] 15 September 1702.

¹²⁰ Marshall, *Duchess Anne*, p. 108.

¹²¹ Scott-Moncrieffe, *Household Book of Lady Griselle Baillie*; Lochhead, *The Scots Household*, pp. 34-53; Kelsall, *Scottish Lifestyle*, pp. 206-226.

an array of guests including politicians and even royalty.¹²² Lady Katherine was fulfilling her role as a political wife by undertaking what can be considered a precursor to the later political activity of society hostess.¹²³ She attended her husband's invited political associates, reported on this event and was doing so within the context of managing election prospects. Her everyday letters refer to visitors, men and women, who arrived either unexpectedly or were invited to join her with or without her husband's presence. Often it was family members who called but letters do reveal that some men arrived specifically to discuss business matters and even to probe for information noblewomen were not always keen to divulge.¹²⁴ This activity among the wives of Scots noblemen should not be overlooked although the lack of sources which detail their involvement is frustrating. Lady Katherine was certainly present at this meeting as she gave an account of it to her father-in-law but as the letter did not reveal what measures had been taken Lady Katherine's full involvement and knowledge remains concealed.

Her role in handling the elections is more easily discovered as she wrote regularly to Tullibardine and used her family connections to garner support for their candidate, Tullibardine's brother, Lord James Murray.¹²⁵ It was their intention to have him elected

¹²² Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 84-98.

¹²³ Lady Katherine's involvement in this event was only referred to indirectly and no evidence survives of the guests, their invitation or necessary arrangements which were made. Fuller evidence of this kind of activity might be uncovered for other women but as yet the sample here only suggests their involvement and not details on how this was carried out.

¹²⁴ Numerous letters set out visitors with Lady Katherine writing in 1693 to report on the Chancellor sending a representative to gain her opinion on her husband's views in Edinburgh while Tullibardine was in London and one letter of 1696 in which Lord Tarbat had arrived to 'pump her' for information regarding her husband's return, see, Blair MS 29.I.(9).24 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Holyroodhouse] 23 January 1697 and Blair MS 29.I.(8).110 Katherine, Lady Murray to Lord Murray, [London] 12 March 1696. The importance of stressing who had not visited was also in the remit of women. In 1698 Susan, Lady Yester was swift to point out who Secretary Carstares had visited but assured her sister he had not visited them as he, 'had no interest heare', Blair MS 29.I.(10).127 Susan, Lady Yester to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Edinburgh] 23 March 1698.

¹²⁵ She urged friends and associates to attend the elections, Blair MS 45.(2).192 Katherine Countess of Tullibardine to Balgowan, [?] 23 September 1702; Lady Nairne apologised for her husband not having helped in the elections, see, Blair MS 24.(2).204 Margaret, Lady Nairne to Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Nairne] 29 September 1702; Blair MS 45.(2).206 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to

to represent Perth and as Tullibardine was absent the task fell to Lady Katherine and their son, Lord Murray, to carry out this plan. The confidence placed in Lady Katherine highlights the invaluable support a wife could offer a noble as in this instance she was both trusted with acting for her husband while also guiding the young Lord Murray in his first venture into the political sphere.¹²⁶ What Tullibardine had set in motion was a covert alliance with two local bailies, George Robertson and William Fleming, who it appears he had instructed to propose to Perth Town Council that his brother, Lord James Murray, was a suitable candidate to represent the burgh.

Various letters sent to Tullibardine between the twentieth of September and the twenty-fifth outline what occurred. Initially Lady Katherine informed her husband that, ‘your son and I are not idle about Lord James’ business’, but she had reservations about the behaviour of Robertson as she found him ‘not fair’ and Fleming, she thought, was ‘little better’.¹²⁷ She opined that the Dean of Guild, Alexander Robertson, was the, ‘man fairest to be chosen for Perth’, but she still hoped Lord James might have a chance.¹²⁸ Two days later she broke the news that the two bailies who had been, ‘intrusted with your brothers affair has been the ruiners of it’, and, reluctant to commit the events to paper she could only write, ‘it is not fitt at this time to be taken notice of for reasons you shall know hereafter’.¹²⁹ She assured him his father and his son had helped her in all that they had ‘been recommended’ by him to do.¹³⁰

Bamfe, [Huntingtower] 29 September 1702, this reminding him of his promise to support Tullibardine in the elections and to, ‘bring as many with him as he can’.

¹²⁶ Their son Lord James Murray was born in 1690 so was only twelve when helping his mother represent his father throughout these elections.

¹²⁷ Blair MS 45.(2).186 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 20 September 1702.

¹²⁸ Blair MS 45.(2).186 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 20 September 1702.

¹²⁹ Blair MS 45.(2).186 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 20 September 1702

¹³⁰ Blair MS 45.(2).186 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 20 September 1702.

By the twenty-fourth of September Lady Katherine was not so guarded and wrote, 'it is neither possible nor fitt to tell you particulars here but in short you are most treacherously betrayed by those you trusted'. She continued by adding, 'that man you told me was so wilie is so indeed and beyond belief base', but she felt she had to, 'restrain my pen not knowing how this will come to you'.¹³¹ Her fury was vented in a letter of the twenty-fifth which gave fuller details. Apparently, although Tullibardine had entrusted the two bailies, Fleming and Robertson, to propose Lord James as a candidate, they had in fact said nothing at all in council. Dean of Guild Robertson had, 'taken his cunning ways to incinuate that he was the man most acceptable to you', and had wanted, 'to stir up the whole toun against any but one of their owne number', being the local representative.¹³² Lady Katherine only discovered all of this by making the journey into Perth in person on the pretext of seeing a nephew but actually she contacted George Austin, a man who was loyal to Tullibardine. It was he who revealed to her what had gone on in the council, what parties were involved and by revealing what he did or did not know she could deduce the extent of the 'betrayal'. Her next concern was that they should appear, as a family, unconcerned about the matter as it was, 'now our business to have our designs come as little abroad as possible', advising that if Tullibardine heard anything of it to 'seem indifferent'. She wrote about another possible local candidate and commented on news from other shires and referred to the Logie family as having been, 'disappointed both in the shire and toun of Montrose'.¹³³ Although she wanted news of other families' failure or success, Lady Katherine did not want her own family discussed in this way. Her behaviour in the whole matter was

¹³¹ Blair MS 45.(2).195 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 24-25 September 1702

¹³² Blair MS 45.(2).195 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 24-25 September 1702.

¹³³ Blair MS 45.(2).195 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 24-25 September 1702.

discreet, including what she wrote to Tullibardine and the clandestine manner in which she visited the town to get answers. Her letters were detailed and explicit on the motives and duplicity of the townsmen which illustrates that she fully understood the concerns within the council and why, from the outset, she was not convinced that Lord James would be elected in Perth.

On September twenty-third she had engaged in an intriguing manoeuvre to maximise the possibility of family representation. She wrote to bailie Marshall at Falkland, where the family also had property and influence, to suggest Lord James as a suitable representative there. She opened this letter in an authoritative manner, writing:

I have ground to believe that there is some design to have a commissioner to represent Falkland in this new Parlement, I cannot but think if you know of it, you would not have acquainted my son Murray or me in my lords absence, for I doubt not but you'll think it both for the countrey's intrest reasonable that he have the recommending of the parson to be commissioner.¹³⁴

Lady Katherine did not at once reveal who that would be and went on to suggest a meeting with trustees and Lord Murray the following day but, after considering such a short timescale might not allow this, she disclosed that Lord James should be 'the man chosen'. She did briefly admit that her son would have written but was on business in Perth but clearly her authority was greater than his and she ended her letter demanding Marshall's, 'greatest diligence and activity in this affair'.¹³⁵ At the same time she wrote a less violent copy of this to Lord Rothes, making him aware of the situation.¹³⁶

However Falkland, although claiming to be a royal burgh, was never represented in

¹³⁴ Blair MS 45.(2).193 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to W. Marshall, Baillie Falkland, [Huntingtower] 23 September 1702.

¹³⁵ Blair MS 45.(2).193 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to W. Marshall, Baillie Falkland, [Huntingtower] 23 September 1702.

¹³⁶ Rothes was referred to in this letter as her cousin and Lady Katherine no doubt wanted the support of someone in the Fife area and also Rothes was determined to re-establish the primacy of his family in the area, see, Brown, *Party Politics*, p. 260.

Parliament and this suggests that Lady Katherine, in contacting bailie Marshall and Rothes, was in fact attempting to resurrect this, theoretical, claim and so place a representative in Parliament by more inventive means.¹³⁷ It is not clear that Tullibardine instructed her to seek representation through Falkland and as this issue has not been noted by recent work on the 1702 elections it suggests the value of searching for this kind of political activity among personal letters and women's correspondence.¹³⁸ Although this attempt failed it demonstrates a woman involving herself in a level of political manoeuvrings which has been previously unknown.

She had the backing of other family members and the Marchioness of Atholl wrote to her grandson Lord Murray discussing the situation, and instructed him on what to say on her behalf to bailie Fleming with whom she was 'very angrie'.¹³⁹ The family was caught up in the intrigue and mostly concerned with who was backing the various candidates, namely two local lairds, Aberuchill and Megginch.¹⁴⁰ The Marchioness instructed her grandson to tell them of her displeasure, writing, 'I little though that any Athollman shud stand in competition with a son of mine'.¹⁴¹ The full force of the Atholl name did not seem to have sufficient importance within the town of Perth. While Dean of Guild Robertson had stirred local feeling that townspeople should be represented by, 'one of their owne number', Lady Katherine was also aware the town wanted a

¹³⁷ Young, *Parliaments of Scotland, II*, p. 793.

¹³⁸ Brown does not mention this attempt to resurrect Falkland in his work nor does Patrick. Brown, 'Party Politics'; D. J. Patrick, 'Unconventional Procedure: Scottish electoral politics after the Revolution', in K. M. Brown and A. J. Mann (eds.), *Parliament and Politics in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2005). I am grateful for Dr Alan McDonald pointing out the significance of this episode and stimulating further ideas on searching for female activity in Campbeltown, which was resurrected in 1700, and others which were not, although the opportunity to do so might have been attempted, these include, Auchtermuchty, Earlsferry, and Newburgh.

¹³⁹ Blair MS 45.(2).194 Amelia, Marchioness of Atholl to Lord Murray, [Blair] 23 September 1702.

¹⁴⁰ Sir Colin Campbell of Aberuchill was a commissioner to Parliament for Inverary from 1669-1674 and for Perthshire from 1690-1702 as was Adam Drummond of Megginch, commissioner to Parliament from 1690-1702 for Perthshire, see Young, *Parliaments of Scotland, I*, p. 89 and p. 204. These names appear within family letters and the edited history mostly in regard to land/legal issues.

¹⁴¹ Blair MS 45.(2).194 Amelia, Marchioness of Atholl to Lord Murray, [Blair] 23 September 1702.

representative with ‘no Atholl inclinations’.¹⁴² John Fleming of Dunkeld wrote to Tullibardine on the matter on the twenty-fifth of September reiterating what Lady Katherine was already aware of, namely that the people of Perth were determined to be represented by one of their own burgesses.¹⁴³ It seems the Atholl family were synonymous in local people’s minds with ‘the highland partie’ and the townsfolk were keen to have a provost and a representative with, ‘no dependence on your lordships family’.¹⁴⁴ Provost Hay reported much the same thing stating that Dean of Guild Robertson was, ‘making a pairtie for himself’, supported by those who would not, ‘consent to the election of a stranger’.¹⁴⁵ Bailie William Fleming was reported as saying he, ‘would spit in the face of any who propose such a thing in council’, although he had previously promised to do just that for Tullibardine. Provost Hay concluded that whole affair had, ‘come to such a heat there is no speaking of it’.¹⁴⁶ The Episcopalianism of the Atholl family, often synonymous with Jacobitism, was clearly at odds with some of the Presbyterian townsfolk and council representatives of Perth.

Lady Katherine, although ‘toyld and vexed’ by the entire matter, remained avid for news of the developing crisis and reported all she learned to Tullibardine.¹⁴⁷ She speculated that Dean of Guild Robertson was working to have others removed from the council by legal means and there was, ‘a mighty ferment of division’, amongst the council and in the town.¹⁴⁸ She had worked hard writing to others for support, speaking

¹⁴² Blair MS 45.(2).195 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 24-25 September 1702.

¹⁴³ Blair MS 45.(2).200 John Fleming of Dunkeld to Earl of Tullibardine, [Dunkeld] 25 September 1702.

¹⁴³ Blair MS 45.(2).200 John Fleming of Dunkeld to Earl of Tullibardine, [Dunkeld] 25 September 1702.

¹⁴⁴ Blair MS 45.(2).200 John Fleming of Dunkeld to Earl of Tullibardine, [Dunkeld] 25 September 1702.

¹⁴⁵ Blair MS 45.(2).199 Provost Hay to Earl of Tullibardine, [Perth] 25 September 1702.

¹⁴⁶ Blair MS 45.(2).199 Provost Hay to Earl of Tullibardine, [Perth] 25 September 1702.

¹⁴⁷ Blair MS 45.(2).203 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 26 September 1702.

¹⁴⁸ A copy of a letter from the Lord Advocate in Edinburgh to Dean of Guild Alexander Robertson is among the Atholl correspondence and confirms to the Dean of Guild that George Robertson is barred from taking office, see Blair MS 45.(2).198 Lord Advocate Edinburgh to Dean of Guild Alexander Robertson, [Edinburgh] 25 September 1702.

with another local noble, Lord Dupplin, instructing her son and of course keeping Tullibardine well informed.¹⁴⁹ She had acted independently in her covert meeting with Austin to find out the truth about what was happening and she was more than aware of the need for discretion both in her behaviour and in her correspondence.¹⁵⁰

It is clear who spearheaded the family campaign in the absence of Tullibardine. All letters come back to Lady Katherine and her grasp on local politics, the men involved and the concerns of the town suggests that her knowledge and abilities in this area of local influence were considerable. The inability to secure an elected commission for Lord James could be seen as a failure but it was not a failure due to her lack of ability or her commitment to the family. None of the letters explain explicitly why those of an 'Atholl inclination' were to be shunned and it was even reported that if Lord James was proposed, 'ye mob would rise'.¹⁵¹ This view was corroborated by local men such as Provost Hay so cannot simply be dismissed as the womenfolk exaggerating the strength of local feeling to explain their failures.

Lady Katherine appears to have had misgivings about the plan from the start as she was worried about Lord James arriving late and warned her husband that, 'you may not expect what you desired concerning him', as early as September twenty-second, just before she wrote about the Falkland commission and before she wrote about the bailies' disloyalty.¹⁵² She also had little confidence in Lord James noting his late arrival by stressing her, 'vexation that he is not yet come', to Perth even though 'an express'

¹⁴⁹ Blair MS 45.(2).203 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 26 September 1702.

¹⁵⁰ Letters reveal her concerns over mail going astray, numbering letters and the fact that plans or measures were not articulated in many of the letters suggests her wariness and discretion, see Blair MS 45.(2).181 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 13 September 1702; Blair MS 45.(2).188 Katherine Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [?] 20 September 1702.

¹⁵¹ Blair MS 45.(2).194 Amelia, Marchioness of Atholl to Lord Murray, [Blair] 23 September 1702.

¹⁵² Blair MS 45.(2).188 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 22 September 1702.

summoned him.¹⁵³ Despite being the reason for her involvement in local politics Lord James did not feature heavily in her correspondence. He may have been reporting his own progress to his brother but Lady Katherine did more to inform Tullibardine of her own efforts and those of their son on Lord James's behalf. In one of her later letters on the matter she wrote, 'your brother might well have stayed at home for all the good he has done here',¹⁵⁴ a remark which betrays her anger and suggests the freedom she had in speaking her mind to Tullibardine.

By the thirtieth of September she was still writing reams on the, 'proof of Alex. Robertson's perfidy', and the situation generally.¹⁵⁵ In this letter she also wrote, 'I have told you over and over again to sett your heart off your brothers election...for there is no hopes of it'.¹⁵⁶ The proud nature of Tullibardine was something Lady Katherine battled with throughout their marriage and this letter suggests that the proposed election of Lord James was very much his idea. As one of the most powerful noble families in the area Tullibardine obviously felt that he could successfully propose Lord James as a representative. Tullibardine gravely misjudged the intentions and concerns of the local townspeople.

A later letter from 1705 suggests something further about the impression Atholl had on local people. Lady Katherine, writing to her mother about their eldest son's growing affinity with Jacobitism and his preference to be 'a violent episcopall' was giving them grave concerns. Lady Katherine noted that her husband was suffering from their son's aversion to Presbyterianism and that, '[Atholl's] friends has not only

¹⁵³ Blair MS 45.(2).188 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 22 September 1702.

¹⁵⁴ Blair MS 45.(2).203 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 26 September 1702.

¹⁵⁵ Blair MS 45.(2).207 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 30 September 1702.

¹⁵⁶ Blair MS 45.(2).207 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 30 September 1702.

diboched his [their son] in his principals but indeavers to stir up the whole shire against Atholl'. She further stated that Atholl was having 'wonderfull effects' locally in 'punishing vice and immorality' and although this made him unpopular it did 'not lessen his zeal to have the Laws duly put in execution'.¹⁵⁷ Lady Katherine enthused that drinking had ceased 'and there was not an oath to be heard in the parish of Blair' which, however unlikely, does suggest that Atholl could hardly have cut a popular figure.

Prior to the elections of 1702 Tullibardine had been in contact with Dean of Guild Robertson regarding the, 'hardships suffered by the town by having regiments quartered in Perth'.¹⁵⁸ Tullibardine was in a position to relieve the demands on the town which regiments created by wintering there and obviously Perth Town Council used the forthcoming elections to exert pressure on him to do so. Tullibardine's answer to this request was that, 'no foot [was] ordered to quarter...and if possible no dragoons', although one regiment was, 'already appointed which cannot be countermanded'.¹⁵⁹ If this answer was less than satisfactory to the town then it may have been another factor the council considered in disregarding the Atholl candidate.

On the sixth of October Lord Murray wrote to his father giving the results of the shire elections and announced, 'Gleneagles,¹⁶⁰ Ochtertyre,¹⁶¹ Gask¹⁶² and Gortie

¹⁵⁷ Blair MS 45.(5).11 Duchess of Atholl to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton [Blair] 15 January 1705.

¹⁵⁸ Blair MS 45.(2).185 Earl of Tullibardine to Dean of Guild Alexander Robertson, [Edinburgh] 15 September 1702.

¹⁵⁹ Blair MS 45.(2).185 Earl of Tullibardine to Dean of Guild Alexander Robertson, [Edinburgh] 15 September 1702.

¹⁶⁰ John Haldane of Gleneagles. Commissioner to Convention of Estates in 1689, Commissioner to Parliament 1689-93 both for Perthshire. Commissioner to Parliament in 1700-1702 for Dunbartonshire and the Commissioner to Parliament 1703-07 for Perthshire. Son of Mungo Haldane and succeeded his father in 1685, Director of the Darien Co, voted to have the colony lawfully recognized. Voted for the Union in 1707. Was a member of the first British parliament. Married Mary Drummond in 1677 daughter of David 3rd Lord Maddertie, had two sons and married secondly in 1691, Helen daughter of Sir Charles Erskine of Alva. Died 1721, see, Young, *Parliaments of Scotland, Vol I*, p. 306.

¹⁶¹ Sir Patrick Murray of Ochtertyre. 2nd Bt. Commissioner to Parliament 1703-1707 for Perthshire. Son and heir of Sir William Murray of Ochtertyre who was a commissioner for Parliament in 1673/4 for Perthshire. Sir Patrick was a Commissioner of Supply, 1689/90 and 1702/04. After the Revolution was employed distributing money among the highland clans. Opposed the Union of 1707. Was suspected of

[Gorthie]¹⁶³ being elected and everybody is very well pleased that such fit persons are chosen and so much your lordship's friends'.¹⁶⁴ Lady Katherine wrote that Dean of Guild Alexander Robertson was commissioner for the burgh instead of Lord James and to his mother, the Marchioness, she openly blamed this on the influence of two local men, 'Aberuchel and Megens' agreeing with her mother-in-law on their role in opposing the Atholl family.¹⁶⁵ Overall however those elected in Perthshire were considered to be 'friends' of Tullibardine and Lady Katherine referred to them in her letter as 'honest gentlemen'.¹⁶⁶ Which rather begs the question of why Tullibardine persisted in promoting his brother as commissioner when those friendly and associated to him were eventually voted in with a 'great majority'.¹⁶⁷

Nobles attempted to secure a seat within a burgh or shire for family members or political associates when any seat became vacant and not just during elections.¹⁶⁸ In January of 1700 Marchmont wrote to magistrates in the burgh of Kirkcudbright in the hope of securing a vacant seat there for his son, Sir Andrew Home of Kimmerghame. Hamilton also expressed an interest in this burgh, and another vacancy in Whithorn, for

complicity in the '15 and lodged for a time at Edinburgh Castle. Married in 1681, Margaret, Daughter of Mungo Haldane of Gleneagles which means he is brother-in-law with Haldane of Gleneagles, died 1735, see, Young, *Parliaments of Scotland, Vol II*, p. 528.

¹⁶² William Oliphant of Gask, Commissioner to Parliament 1703 for Perthshire. Younger son of Laurence Oliphant and succeeded his brother George in 1684. Died unmarried in 1704, see Young, *Parliaments of Scotland Vol II*, p. 555.

¹⁶³ Mungo Graham of Gorthie, Commissioner to Parliament 1703-1707 for Perthshire. Eldest surviving son of Mungo Graham or Graeme 2nd laird of Gorthie, succeeded his father while still a minor in 1671. Educated at St Andrews and won the Silver Arrow as an expert archer in 1687. Later became Chamberlain to the Duke of Montrose. A Commissioner of supply 1702 and 1704, voted in favour of the Union 1707. Elected to the first parliament of Great Britain, living at his London house when in parliament and at Buchanan when in the country. Receiver General of Customs in 1716 and a Rector of Glasgow University in 1718-20. He was 'esteemed for his worth, knowledge and intellect' but of a 'silent and lonely disposition'. He died aged 83 in 1754, see, Young, *Parliaments of Scotland, Vol I*, p. 292.

¹⁶⁴ Blair MS 45.(2).212 Lord Murray to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 6 October 1702.

¹⁶⁵ Blair MS 45.(2).216 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Amelia, Marchioness of Atholl, [Huntingtower] 5 October 1702.

¹⁶⁶ Blair MS 45.(2).215 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 4 October 1702.

¹⁶⁷ Blair MS 45.(2).215 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine to Earl of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 4 October 1702.

¹⁶⁸ D. J Patrick, 'People and Parliament in Scotland 1689-1702', unpublished PhD Thesis (St Andrews, 2002), pp. 246-247.

his brother lord Basil Hamilton as every available place, ‘presented an obvious opportunity for parties to strengthen their position in Parliament’.¹⁶⁹ While Hamilton was unsuccessful Marchmont’s son was elected for Kirkcudbright but securing the election of a chosen candidate within a burgh by this means of political management did not happen without, ‘incurring some form of debt’.¹⁷⁰ In the case of Tullibardine the religious differences seem to have been insurmountable. Another problem was residency and as Lord James would have been considered a non-resident of Perth the legal issue of providing him with a burgess ticket may well have been another consideration for the town.¹⁷¹

Other examples of nobles attempting to secure a seat for a family member illustrate the involvement of noblewomen from brief references or short letters. Hamilton’s wish to have his brother Lord Basil represent Kirkcudbright in 1700 came to nothing but letters survive which state Basil’s wife, Lady Mary of Baldoon, should write to people she knew and exert what influence she had locally on his behalf.¹⁷² Despite answering that she did not know who to write to in the matter of elections the fact remains that it was something men expected her to be able to do.¹⁷³

The mother of Charles Hope of Hopetoun wrote on her son’s behalf to Hamilton and to Duchess Anne in 1702 to protest that her son was not opposing Hamilton in standing for Linlithgow for opposition’s sake.¹⁷⁴ Hopetoun had married the daughter of the Earl of Annandale and due to his association with Annandale did not receive Hamilton’s backing. Lady Margaret attempted to smooth over ill feeling in writing to

¹⁶⁹ Patrick, ‘People and Parliament in Scotland 1689-1702’, pp. 246-247.

¹⁷⁰ Patrick, ‘People and Parliament in Scotland 1689-1702’, p. 246.

¹⁷¹ Patrick, ‘People and Parliament in Scotland 1689-1702’, pp. 246-247.p. 244. Lord James did eventually pursue a political career and represented Perth in 1708, and again from 1710 to 1715, see Paul, *Scots Peerage, I*, p. 476.

¹⁷² NAS GD406/1/4585 Basil Hamilton to Duke of Hamilton, [London] 23March 1700.

¹⁷³ NAS GD406/1/4603 Anne, Duchess of Hamilton to Duke of Hamilton, [Hamilton] 2 April 1700.

¹⁷⁴ NAS GD406/1/4892 Margaret, Lady Hope to Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, [Tinningham] 25 September 1702; NAS GD406/1/4979 Margaret Lady Hope to Duke of Hamilton, [Tinningham] 23 September 1702.

the Duchess but took the opportunity to lecture Hamilton on the constitution defending, 'the barons privilege to have their own choice'.¹⁷⁵ Noblewomen understood that party differences or family rivalries impacted on voting procedures and in this instance Lady Margaret intervened to support her son in pursuing his political career.¹⁷⁶

The letters between Lord Lothian and his wife dating from 1691 are also indicative of her knowledge regarding politics and she too seems to have advised and discussed political appointments, party preferences and general political and social gossip.¹⁷⁷ Letters dating from the later period show noblewomen's continued interest in politics after union with the Countess of Callander writing in 1708 to her nephew Montrose regarding the 1708 elections. There was also a sustained correspondence between Christian Carnegie, Duchess of Montrose and her husband who attended parliament in London after 1709.¹⁷⁸ These letters show her interest in events, the appointment of ministers and she reported to her husband on Scots going to London or meeting with her to discuss business and politics. The references in her letters are very much intertwined with family news and the health of the children and she makes a great number of references hoping parliament will rise and she will soon have him home.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁵ NAS GD406/1/4979 Margaret Lady Hope to Duke of Hamilton, [Tinningham] 23 September 1702.

¹⁷⁶ Hopetoun was successful in gaining the seat, Brown, 'Party Politics', p. 259.

¹⁷⁷ NAS GD40/2/8/40 Lothian to Anne, Lady Lothian, [London] 26 December 1691, Lothian reporting his long conference with Portland, Canterbury and others on the settlement of church affairs; NAS GD40/2/8/41 Lothian to Anne, Lady Lothian [London] 29 December 1691 on same issue; NAS GD40/2/7/38 Lady Isabella Campbell to Anne, Lady Lothian, [Edinburgh] 15 June 1692, general gossip and commenting on the earls of Balcarres, Linlithgow and Breadalbane meeting on the street, saying, 'those mice begin to swarm again'; NAS GD40/2/7/66 Anne, Lady Lothian to Lothian, [Newbattle] 11 November 1695, reporting their son's meeting with Saltoun and his personal views on who can be considered Whig or Tory; NAS GD40/2/7/76 Lady Jedburgh to Anne, Lady Lothian, [London] 9 March 1698, commenting on the fears of a dispute between the king's advisors.

¹⁷⁸ NAS GD220/5/160 Anne Graham, Countess of Callander to Duke of Montrose, [?] 14-19 February 1708; NAS GD220/5/215 Christian Carnegie, Duchess of Montrose to Duke of Montrose, [Montrose] November/December 1709. Montrose was advanced to the rank of duke by a patent dated ^{April} 1707. He was included in the sixteen peers elected by the last Scottish parliament on 13th February 1707 and successfully retained his seat in the House of Lords at several subsequent elections. His position in government was recognized on 28th February 1709 when he was made keeper of the privy seal of Scotland, an office which he retained until 1713, when he was removed by Oxford's Tory administration.

¹⁷⁹ NAS GD220/5/224 Christian Carnegie to Duke of Montrose, [Montrose] January to March 1710. These letters cover numerous topics from discussing the movements of Montrose's associates (Roths, Haddington and Gorthie are all mentioned), discussion on what is being debated, toleration issues and

Whether parliament was in Edinburgh or London wives did not always accompany their husbands and in the period after union noblewomen continued to provide reliable information, valuable advice and proved to be dependable managers in their husband's absence.

The fact that letters survive which outline a great deal of what Lady Katherine did in the 1702 elections should alert us to the possibility that many other noblewomen could easily have been doing much the same. Her discretion was vital not only to keep the family business private but also to maintain a level of propriety. One letter to Tullibardine defended their son Lord Murray from being at fault in the matter with Lady Katherine asking her husband to suspend his judgment and, 'doe not belive it is throu the mismanagement of a young spark where I know some will endeavour to lay it'.¹⁸⁰ She had earlier reassured him that neither she nor their son were, 'idle in his business', and this suggests that Tullibardine would hear criticisms of their conduct. Aware of this possibility Lady Katherine gave detailed information and many promises of telling him more in person as she was well aware that her reputation, as well as her son's, was at stake.

In light of so many things going wrong and in this case the utter failure of the entire venture, why did noblewomen become involved at all? In this instance the interests of the wider family, the need to secure a career and position for Lord James and the desire by all political men to strengthen their position in parliament motivated Lady Katherine to act in her husband's stead. That she did so willingly, with determination and considerable ability suggests her understanding of politics and her desire to participate in the process. Fortunately her correspondence highlights her

clergy of particular interest and she makes reference to keeping up with the news and particularly the trial of Henry Sacheverell, in 1710.

¹⁸⁰ Blair MS 45.(2).202 Katherine, Countess of Tullibardine, [Huntingtower] 26 September 1702.

participation, revealing not only her role but demonstrating the complexity of local politics and the relationship between local nobility and the town. The less detailed letters and brief references in other noblewomen's correspondences show women with no less interest and enthusiasm for political news and intrigue. That this political aspect of their correspondence is not separated in their writing from family concerns, economic issues or religious matters implies the intrinsic nature of family interest and politics. If noblewomen did not separate the two then understanding their perception of politics means examining their lives as comprehensively as possible. Their politicking cannot be grasped in isolation. The same is true of the men who took on the major political roles in making the Union. The predominant attitude of men towards noblewomen was one of inclusion, trust and reliance. Our understanding of their choices and motivations would be further augmented if the roles of wives, mothers and sisters were acknowledged in the way contemporaries did, as a vital component in family interest.

Conclusion

From the Revolution of 1688 and up to the Union of 1707 Scotland experienced changes which eventually led to the loss of Scottish independence and the creation of Great Britain. The noblewomen who form the basis of this research were well placed to engage in the public and political life of Scotland in this period. Affairs of government, military matters, economic and business concerns as well as the issues of religion, law and education were all in the remit of politicised nobles.

Noblewomen understood the role of their male counterparts within the Scottish aristocracy but this research demonstrates that women also played an important role within the governing elite. A role which has still to be fully revealed and explored.

The events within this period have been the focus of historical studies whose main purpose has been to determine and understand the causes and then the impact of the Union. The ‘ill years’ of the 1690’s as well as broader economic problems encompassing Atlantic trade, European war, the Darien venture and the relationship between Scotland and England have all been examined elsewhere. A primary objective of this research has been to augment what is already known about this period by adding a female perspective. Information gleaned from women’s letters reveal how events affected the nobility, what actions the family took to manage change and the impact these had on estate management and related business. A nobleman had the right and duty to govern but equally understood, by both men and women, was the role of noble wives, mothers and sisters. This thesis has begun to uncover that role and demonstrates that noblewomen, aided by their status and relative independence, made a vital contribution to society.

Noblewomen's surviving writing and correspondence provide a rich source which reveal a great deal despite the problem of a general deficiency of reliable information about noblewomen. Close examination of surviving sources, attention to letters which initially appear to contain only family news and a nuanced reading of individual letters revealed far more than initial reading might suggest. A crucial point is that a female perspective has survived and is there to be found.

Understanding why it has been either wilfully ignored or just generally overlooked has been an important consideration. Male contemporaries did not disregard the advice, influence or support of noblewomen. Although there are many accounts suggesting what was expected of noblewomen some responses to female behaviour may not always have been blatantly expressed but, subtle or obvious, they exist nonetheless. It is paradoxical that historical studies have failed to place the same emphasis on female roles and responsibilities as their contemporaries did.

While personal letters reveal a vast deal about individual lives and experiences, gaining an overview of how noblewomen operated within a patriarchal society has been another important objective. The first three chapters have addressed very personal areas of noblewomen's lives in examining marriage, religion and letter writing which are generally considered to have been within the private or domestic sphere of female activity. This research has embraced current thinking on the overused dichotomy of public and private, a framework that has become familiar but actually distorts understanding of women in history. Susan Amussen states that it is, 'inappropriate to dismiss what happened in the family as private', because the family and state were, 'inextricably intertwined in the minds of men and women in the

sixteenth and seventeenth century'.¹ Amussen concludes that adhering to this concept prevents understanding politics, as it has been conventionally defined, because scholars must also understand and incorporate the politics of the family.² Separating public and private life, and considering one to be male and the other female or domestic, prevents us from grasping the experience of life within a noble family where so much of what was public spilled over into the realm of the household, estate and the family interest. Anne Laurence agrees that households have to be regarded not as purely a domestic or female realm but as the place where all levels of people came into contact.³ Differing beliefs, political ideas and various degrees of status were all mixed within a noble home and the reality of this situation and the confirmation of female autonomy within that home is a recurring theme within this thesis. A further aspect of this is considering the built environment of the household and placing women, not just in the house, but in the outer buildings, the offices, the farm, gardens and grounds.⁴ Acknowledging that women were creating space for themselves suggests a much broader remit for women. Demonstrating the extent of noblewomen's responsibility is another key finding which demands further research. The evidence revealed here suggests that noblewomen were managing estates, farms, tenants. They were building, designing and planting. They were investing and lending. In all of these activities they were undertaking complex legal and financial business then the domestic realm takes on a new form and it is less private than has previously been understood. This area, women in business and

¹ S. Dwyer Amussen, *An Ordered Society, Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (New York, 1988), pp.2-3.

² Dwyer Amussen, *Ordered Society*, p. 2.

³ A. Laurence, 'Real and Imagined Communities in the Lives of Women in Seventeenth Century Ireland: Identity and Gender', in S. Tarbin and S. Broomhill (eds.), *Women, Identities and Communities in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot, 2008), pp. 13-29.

⁴ F. Maxwell and S. French, 'Domestic Spaces and Places: Concepts of Femininity and Authority in Early Modernity', unpublished conference paper, *Attending to Early Modern Women* (Milwaukee, 2012)

management, has revealed a particularly diverse area which would benefit from extensive further research.

Women's religiosity is another area that might easily be relegated to the female and domestic sphere once more but the evidence presented here suggests that a pious wife could also attain an important level of authority and independence. Religion dominated throughout the period and much political ideology stemmed from strongly held religious beliefs and personal experiences. Lady Katherine's religious writing reveals that she was aware of the autonomy her religiosity afforded her. Religion was fundamental to her and she connected this to her political stance on Union. A distinctly female role has emerged, whether women embraced it or not, in presenting a pious role model, providing spiritual guidance and in doing so women could enhance and support the political resolve of the family.

While the research demonstrates a clear connection between religion and politics it is equally difficult to separate politics from other activities noblewomen were involved in. An element of political awareness, opinion, support and at times manoeuvring was readily discerned in the letters noblewomen wrote seeking patronage. Within letters relating to estate management and those concerned with legal or financial business often the political concerns of the period were apparent and if not directly addressed by women they were, for the most part, an underlying theme. Of course the argument that the major changes of the period would have interested noblewomen as much as anyone else is valid but if this was the case then why have noblewomen failed to feature significantly within the historiography? To answer this it was necessary to examine noblewomen's lives in the broadest possible way. Only when we include all aspects of their lives is it possible to discern how interconnected politics could be with all the other roles and responsibilities they

assumed. Noblewomen had no formal political and obviously no voting patterns survive for women, no parliamentary speeches and no official correspondences. Searching for female politicisation in the same format as we would expect to find men's only leaves us with the obvious fact that women had no formal mandate to participate. It is only recently that a form of social politics has been identified for English noblewomen in the later eighteenth century.⁵ Noblewomen had an important role to play in party politics, in campaigning and in forming and disseminating political ideas and values. An earlier form of this activity has been revealed here as evident in Scotland in the period 1688-1707. This female activity, understood, tolerated and even welcomed by men, should be regarded as a precursor to later female political activity in eighteenth century politics.

Marriages, family alliances and connections were of central importance to the networks noblewomen created and maintained. These networks provided the means to share family news and allowed women the opportunity to help and support one another. Crucially they connected noblewomen to others who shared reports on current events and religious or political intelligence. The importance of this role has been demonstrated here as a particular female strength and one which men relied upon. It provided them with valuable support and information and also helped them to initiate and maintain political connections. A distinctly female role of mediator has also been revealed and political groupings benefited from noblewomen establishing and maintaining this role between families which allowed political alliances to be maintained, if not flourish.

Evidence supports the idea that particularly politicised noblewomen were able communicators and worked independently to convey news and political ideas. Those

⁵ Chalus, *Political Life*, pp. 75-79.

noblewomen who were less obviously politically motivated could still support their husbands as trusted confidantes and advisors and this role cannot be underestimated within a patriarchal society. Noblewomen, like many others were marginalised and disenfranchised within society but, in the sources used here, none complained of this state of affairs.⁶ Noblewomen with particular privileges did not attempt to change the status quo or alter their personal affairs to accommodate those without similar rights. Their adherence to the social customs, family traditions and contemporary values show their understanding and acceptance of the society they lived in.

There is little evidence to suggest that the women within this sample felt subordinate within their families and marriages. While marriages reveal varying levels of happiness, love and mutual respect there is a surprising amount of parity within many of the matches. Noblewomen within these kinds of relationships enjoyed a level of independence and freedom of expression that undermines ideas about female subordination within patriarchy. In return men benefited from sound advice, trusted their wives as managers and celebrated their piety and devotion to the family. The truth remains however that women could not enjoy any of the more tangible benefits which men did. They could not hold office although they asked for positions for men. They could not engage formally within the Kirk although their influence with congregations and ministers is clear. They could invest in the Darien venture but could not formally engage in business. Most importantly they could hold and express a political will and desire for change but could not participate officially.

The family emerges here as central to all of their activities. Noblewomen's greatest authority and source of independence stemmed from her role within the

⁶ Francis Harris describes the extensive family networks and social circles of English political women but also points out that some women, 'had no ambitions to play an active role in public life', but found themselves in that position nonetheless, F. Harris, 'A Revolution Correspondence: Elizabeth Packer Geddes and Elizabeth Burnet', in Tarbin and Broomhall, *Women, Identities and Communities*, pp.165-177.

family and promoting the family interest. Some women were ambitious and strove to secure status and position knowing that this created an opportunity for greater wealth and power. Others, less ruthless but nonetheless engaged on behalf of the family, would still endeavour to support, manage and promote the family. Even noblewomen with lesser capabilities and lack of judgment attempted to do what they could to provide the family with the necessary administration and direction. Family interest was practically synonymous with the personal interest of noblewomen. Pursuing their own ambitions meant working in the interests of the family and allowed women to release their own potential. Not all women achieved this and some had better judgment, circumstances or luck than others but family interest has been identified as a significant driving force for noblewomen.

Scotland, like every other country, was constantly in a process of formation and after Union there were different challenges and problems to be faced which needed new solutions. These challenges and problems can only be more roundly appreciated by the inclusion of a female experience. Noblewomen did all that was within their power to support their menfolk. That could have meant living in exile, embracing the new regime at the Revolution, choosing to become a Jacobite or resolutely opposing Union. This thesis argues that noblewomen did all of these because they, like men, possessed equally strong religious principles and were similarly motivated by family interest which gave them purpose and a clear political will. The work undertaken here draws on, and augments, a growing understanding that women's experiences are a crucial part of understanding the wider political picture at a time when it appears the future of the country was principally determined

by a small minority of men.⁷ The lack of a formal mandate only excluded noblewomen from formal participation in politics. Like many others who were marginalised at this time this did not prevent them from having a political opinion, contributing to political life in diverse ways and ultimately playing their part in shaping the political landscape of Scotland and Great Britain.

⁷ Chalus, *Political Life*, p. 1-20; Amussen, *Ordered Society*, pp. 34-66; J. Couchman and A. Crabb, 'Form and Persuasion in Women's letters 1400-1700', J. Couchman and A. Crabb (eds), *Women's letters Across Europe, Form and Persuasion* (Aldershot, 2005), pp. 3-18; J. D. Campbell and A. Larsen, *Early Modern Women and Transnational Communities of Letters* (Aldershot, 2009); Glover, *Elite Women and Polite Society*, pp.3-23.

Appendix 1

List of Noblewomen

The noblewomen are listed under their family name in the period 1688 and 1707, not the family they originated from as grouping them in this way allows for clearer connections to be made.

Annandale

Sophia Fairholm was the daughter and heiress of John Fairholm of Craigiehall, Edinburgh. She married William Johnstone, second earl and first marquis of Annandale in 1682. She died in 1716 after being practically separated from her husband for the last four years of her life. She will be referred to as Lady Annandale.

Atholl

Lady Amelia Anne Sophia Stanley (d1703) was the daughter of James Stanley, seventh earl of Derby and Charlotte de le Trémoille. She married John, marquis of Atholl (1631-1703), son of John Murray, first earl of Atholl and Jean Campbell, on fifth May 1659. She will be referred to as the Marchioness of Atholl.

Lady Katherine Hamilton was baptised on twenty-fourth October 1662. She was the daughter of William Douglas Hamilton and Anne Hamilton, third Duchess of Hamilton. She married Sir John Murray, earl of Tullibardine and later first duke of Atholl in 1683. She died on the eleventh of January in 1707 aged forty-four. In her lifetime she was called, Lady Murray, Countess of Tullibardine and the Duchess of Atholl. She will be referred to here as Lady Katherine.

Lady Charlotte Murray was the daughter of John Murray first marquis of Atholl and Lady Amelia Anne Sophia Stanley. Born in 1662 she lived with English relatives and married Thomas Cooper in 1690. She was ostracised for this marriage and died in 1735. She will be referred to as Lady Charlotte.

Lady Amelia Murray was the daughter of John Murray first Marquis of Atholl and Lady Amelia Anne Sophia Stanley. Born in 1666 she married Hugh, Lord Lovat in 1685. Lovat died in 1696 and his eldest daughter assumed the title while her widowed mother held the estates. A forced marriage was contracted by Simon Fraser of Beaufort, the notorious Lovat scandal of 1697. Lady Amelia is referred to as the Dowager Lady Lovat and her daughter Lady Lovat.

The following women all married into the Murray of Atholl family:

Margaret Lady Nairn was the daughter and sole heir of Robert Nairn, first lord Nairn and Margaret Graham. She married Lord William Murray son the first Marquis and Marchioness of Atholl and brother to the first duke of Atholl. This marriage allowed her husband to take the title of second lord Nairn. She died on 14th November 1747. She will be referred to as Lady Nairn.

Lady Katherine Skene, wife of the first duke of Atholl's brother, Lord Edward Murray, son of the Marquis and Marchioness of Atholl. They married in 1690 and she died in 1743.

Catherine Countess of Dunmore was Catherine **Watts** the daughter of Richard Watts. She married Charles Murray, first earl of Dunmore, son of the first Marquis and Marchioness of Atholl in 1682. She died before 22 January 1711. She will be referred to as Lady Dunmore.

Blantyre

Anne Hamilton, Lady Blantyre was the daughter of Sir Robert Hamilton, Lord Pressmennan and Marion Denholm. She was baptised on first August 1658. She married Alexander Stewart, fifth Lord Blantyre in 1682. She died circa December 1722.

Dalhousie

Lady Mary Moore was the daughter of Henry **Moore**, first earl of Drogheda and Alice Spencer. She married William Ramsey, third earl of Dalhousie in 1682. She married secondly John Bellenden, second lord Bellenden of Broughton in 1683. She died in March 1726.

Findlater

Lady Anne Montgomerie was the daughter of Hugh Montgomerie, seventh earl of Eglinton and Lady Anne Hamilton. She married, firstly, Robert Seton before 1655. She married, secondly, James Ogilvy, third earl of Findlater in 1658. She died in 1687.

Anne Dunbar was born circa 1672. She was the daughter of Sir William Dunbar and Janet Brodie. She married James Ogilvy, fourth earl of Findlater and son of James Ogilvy, third earl of Findlater and Lady Anne Montgomerie in 1687. She died on fourteenth August 1708. Her son was known as Lord Deskford and her husband was also first Viscount Seafield.

Forfar.

Robina Lockhart was born circa 1662. She was the daughter of Sir William Lockhart of Lee and Robina Sewster. She married Archibald Douglas, first earl of Forfar in 1679 in London. She died on twentieth March 1741. Her letters stem from her relationship as godmother to James Hamilton, Earl of Arran and later fourth Duke of Hamilton.

Hamilton

Anne, Duchess of Hamilton was born in January 1632. She was the daughter of James Hamilton, first duke of Hamilton and Lady Margaret Fielding. She married William Douglas, earl of Selkirk in 1656. She died on seventeenth October 1716 at age eighty-four at Hamilton. She was a powerful heiress, duchess in her own right and rebuilt the family fortune and estate within her lifetime. She will be referred to as Duchess Anne

Susanna Hamilton, later Countess of Cassillis. Born before 1638. She was sister to Duchess Anne. She married John Kennedy, seventh earl of Cassilis in December 1668. She died in 1694. Cassillis was a supporter of the covenant and refused to persecute conventicles. Lady Susanna was in the household of Charles II's wife, Queen Henrietta Maria and developed a friendship with James II's wife, Queen Mary of Modena. Her daughter was Lady Anne Kennedy who married Lord John Hamilton, earl of Ruglen and son of the third Duke and Duchess of Hamilton. She died circa February 1699. She is referred to as the Countess of Cassillis.

Lady Katherine Hamilton is named above.

Lady Susan Hamilton was born in 1667. She was the daughter of the third Duke and Duchess of Hamilton. She married, firstly, John Cochrane, second earl of Dundonald in 1684. He died in 1690 leaving her with two sons and a daughter. She married, secondly, Charles Hay, Lord Yester then later third marquis of Tweeddale

in 1697. She died in February 1737. She is referred to as Lady Dundonald, then Lady Yester.

Lady Margaret Hamilton was born in December 1668. She was the daughter of the third Duke and Duchess of Hamilton. She married James Maule, fourth earl of Panmure in 1687. Her husband was a Presbyterian but a Jacobite and after his involvement in the rising of 1715 she remained in Scotland and managed to secure the family finances and estates without her husband. She died on sixth December 1731, without issue. She is referred to as Lady Panmure.

The following women all married into the Hamilton family.

Lady Anne Spencer was born on twenty-fourth of June 1667. She was the daughter of Robert Spencer, second earl of Sunderland and Lady Anne Digby. She married James Hamilton, earl of Arran and later fourth duke of Hamilton, the son and heir to Duchess Anne and the third duke of Hamilton, on fifth of January 1687. She died in July 1690 at age twenty-four without male issue. Her second surviving daughter, Lady Mary lived with Duchess Anne until her death in 1707.

Elizabeth Gerard, daughter of Digby Gerard, fifth Baron Gerard and Lady Elizabeth Gerard. She was the heir of Gerard and brought considerable wealth to her marriage. It was the second marriage of James fourth duke of Hamilton which took place in 1698. She bore him three sons and four daughters. The fourth Duke was killed in a duel in 1712. She died in 1744. She is referred to as Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton.

Elizabeth Villiers was the daughter of Sir Edward Villiers and Lady Francis Howard. She married Lord George Hamilton, first earl of Orkney and son of the third Duke and Duchess of Hamilton, in November 1695. She had been mistress to King William and was granted Irish estates which were unfortunately reclaimed by the crown on the accession of Queen Anne in 1702. She died on nineteenth April 1733. She is referred to as Lady Orkney.

Lady Mary of Baldoon, the daughter of David Dunbar of Baldoon, Baronet. She married Lord Basil Hamilton in 1691. He died as the result of a drowning accident in 1701. She died in 1760. Referred to as Lady Mary of Baldoon.

Hope

Lady Margaret Hamilton was the daughter of John Hamilton, fourth earl of Haddington and Lady Christian Lindsay. She married John Hope of Hopetoun in

December of 1668. He died in 1682 and she lived until 1711. Her son was Charles, first earl of Hopetoun.

Lothian

Lady Jean Campbell was the daughter of Archibald Campbell, first marquis of Argyll and Lady Margaret Douglas. She married Robert Kerr, first marquis of Lothian in January 1661. She died in July 1712. She is referred to as Lady Lothian

Mar

Jane Mackenzie was the daughter of George Mackenzie second earl of Seaforth and Barbara Forbes. She married John Erskine twentieth earl of Mar of Mar in 1647. She was the grandmother of John Erskine, sixth earl of Mar, a notable political player in the Revolution to Union period.

Mary Maule was the daughter of George Maule second earl of Panmure. She married Col. John Erskine twenty-first earl of Mar and so was mother to the earl of Mar, referred to here as John Erskine sixth earl of Mar. She is referred to as the Dowager Countess of Mar

Lady Sophia Erskine was the daughter of John Erskine twentieth earl of Mar and she married Alexander Forbes, third lord Forbes of Pitsligo in 1676. She was the aunt of the sixth Earl of Mar.

The following women married into the Mar family.

Lady Margaret Hay was the daughter of Thomas Hay, seventh earl of Kinnoull and Elizabeth Drummond. She was the first wife of John Erskine the sixth earl of Mar, marrying him in 1703.. She came from a notable political family and her relative was the Marquis of Tweeddale. She was also a close friend of another notable political player Mary, Duchess of Queensberry. She died after childbirth on twenty-fifth of April 1707.

Lady Frances Pierrepont was the daughter of Evelyn Pierrepont, first duke of Kingston and lady Mary Fielding. She was the second wife of John Erskine the sixth earl of Mar and married him in 1714. She died on the fourth of March 1761. Mar lived in exile after taking part in the Jacobite rising of 1715. His wife was the sister of Lady Mary Wortley Montague the writer and diarist.

Rachel Chiesly was the daughter of John Chiesly of Dalry. He was a convicted murderer who had shot dead Sir George Lockhart in 1689. She married James Erskine, later Lord Grange the brother of the earl of Mar. Her early marriage was happy but the couple had difficulties and Lady Grange was separated from her

husband and eventually estranged from her children. After outrageous outbursts and threats from Lady Grange Lord Grange had her abducted and removed to the west and St Kilda. She wrote to friends for help and to accuse her husband but died in 1749. She is referred to as Lady Grange.

Marchmont

Grisell Ker was the daughter of Sir Thomas Ker and Grisell Halket. She married Patrick Hume first earl of Marchmont in January 1660. She died on eleventh October 1703.

Grisell Hume was the daughter of Patrick Hume, first earl of Marchmont. She was born in 1664 and she married George Baillie of Jerviswood, son of Robert Baillie. Her daughter was lady Murray of Stanhope who wrote a memoir on her parents and their lives. The families had lived together in exile after the execution of Robert Baillie in 1684 and rose to prominence after supporting the Prince of Orange and the Revolution of 1688. She died in 1746.

Rachel Baillie was the daughter of George Baillie of Jerviswood and Lady Grisell Hume. She married Charles Hamilton, Lord Binning, son of Thomas Hamilton, sixth earl of Haddington and Helen Hope in 1719. She died in March 1773.

Montrose.

Lady Christian Leslie was the daughter of John Leslie, first duke of Rothes and Lady Anne Lindsay. She married James Graham, third marquis of Montrose and secondly, Sir John Bruce son of Sir William Bruce and Mary Halkett, in May 1687. She died in April 1710.

Christian Carnegie was the daughter of David Carnegie, third earl of Northesk and Lady Elizabeth Lindsay. She married James Graham, fourth marquis of Montrose and later first duke , in 1702. She died in May 1744. She is referred to as Lady Montrose.

Queensberry

Mary Boyle was the daughter of Charles Boyle, second baron Clifford and Lady Jane Seymour. She married James Douglas second duke of Queensberry in 1685. She died on 2 October 1709.

Appendix 2

List of the sample families and the number of women counted within each one.

	No of women	Outwith/no dates	No of titles	TOTAL	
Abercorn	10	2	3	8	[3 titled]
Aberdeen	12	5	12	7	[5 titled]
Aboyne	8	4	5	4	[2titled]
Airlie	13	9	6	4	[4 titled]
Annandale	9	5	4	4	[1titled]
Arbuthnott	19	9	4	10	[3titled]
Argyll	16	10	9	6	[6 titled]
Atholl	20	10	10	10	[10 titled]
Balcarres	12	8	8	4	[3 titled]
Balmerino	7	4	5	3	[2titled]
Banff	13	8	2	5	[1 titled]
Bargany	12	8	5	4	[2 titled]
Belhaven	13	9	3	4	[2 titled]
Bellenden	6	4	4	2	[2 titled]
Blantyre	8	4	4	4	[1 titled]
Breadalbane	22	13	2	9	[3 titled]
Buchan	13	9	3	4	[3 titled]
Burleigh	11	6	2	5	[1 titled]
Bute	9	5	2	4	[2 titled]
Caithness	7	5	2	2	
Callendar	7	3	4	4	[2 titled]
Cardross	11	8	2	3	
Carnwath	7	6	3	1	
Cassillis	13	7	6	6	[4 titled]
Colville	3	1	1	2	
Cranstoun	9	7	2	2	[1 titled]
Crawford	16	11	7	5	[3 titled]
Cromartie	18	9	5	9	[3 titled]
Dalhousie	1	0	0	1	[titled]
Delorain	7	5	3	2	[2 titled]
Douglas	4	2	3	2	[2 titled]
Duffus	13	9	6	4	[2 titled]
Dundee	4	2	1	2	[1 titled]
Dundonald	7	2	4	5	[4 titled]
Dunfermline	2	2	2	0	
Dunkeld	9	1	2	8	[2 titled]
Dunmore	5	3	3	2	[1 titled]
Eglington	21	14	8	7	[5 titled]
Elibank	14	12	4	2	[2 titled]

Elphinstone	6	1	3	5	[2 titled]
Erroll	4	2	2	2	[2 titled]
Findlater	6	2	4	4	[3 titled]
Forfar	2	0	2	2	[2 titled]
Forrester	7	7	3	0	
Fraser	3	3	3	0	
Galloway	7	5	2	2	
Garnock	8	5	1	3	[1 titled]
Glasgow	7	3	1	4	[1 titled]
Glencairn	6	4	2	2	[2 titled]
Gray	6	3	2	3	[1 titled]
Haddington	7	3	3	4	[2 titled]
Hamilton	10	4	6	6	[6 titled]
Hay/Dupplin	6	2	6	4	[4 titled]
Home	9	4	5	5	[4 titled]
Hope	7	6	3	1	[titled]
Hyndford	8	4	1	4	
Islay					
Kellie					
Kenmure	0	0	0	0	
Kilmarnock	3	1	3	2	[2 titled]
Kilsyth	3	3	0	0	
Kinnaird	3	1	2	2	[1 titled]
Kintore	7	6	5	1	[titled]
Lauderdale	8	5	4	3	[1 titled]
Leven	5	2	2	3	[2 titled]
Lindores	2	1	2	1	[titled]
Lothian	13	9	3	4	[1 titled]
Loudoun	7	5	3	2	[2 titled]
Lovat	7	4	2	3	[2 titled]
Mar	5	0	3	5	[3 titled]
March	7	4	4	3	[3 titled]
Marchmont	11	4	2	7	[2 titled]
Marischal	12	10	4	2	
Melville					
Mentieth	5	4	2	1	[titled]
Montrose	4	2	2	2	[2 titled]
Morton	2	1	2	1	[titled]
Nairn	7	0	2	7	[2 titled]
Newark	11	5	3	6	[3 titled]
Northesk	7	5	2	2	[1 titled]
Oliphant	1	0	1	1	[titled]
Oxfuird	15	10	3	5	[1 titled]
Panmure	4	1	2	3	[2 titled]
Pitsligo	5	4	3	1	[titled]
Portmore	5	4	2	1	[titled]
Primrose	3	1	1	2	[1 titled]
Queensberry	5	1	2	4	[2 titled]
Reay	3	3	0	0	
Rollo	9	4	3	5	[1 titled]
Rosebery	13	8	4	5	[3 titled]
Ross	12	7	7	5	[3 titled]
Roths	4	2	2	2	[2 titled]
Roxburghe	3	1	3	2	[2 titled]
Ruglen	0	0	0	0	
Rutherford	9	9	0	0	
Ruthven	4	3	1	1	[titled]
Saltoun	7	3	2	4	[1 titled]

Selkirk	0	0	0	0
Sempill	4	1	3	3 [2 titled]
Sinclair	11	7	3	4 [1 titled]
Stair	17	7	2	10 [2 titled]
Stormont	0	0	0	0
Strathallan	3	2	1	1 [titled]
Strathmore	7	2	5	5 [2 titled]
Sutherland	5	4	2	1 [titled]
Tarras	0	0	0	0
Teviot	0	0	0	0
Torphichen	11	9	6	2 [titled]
Tweeddale	7	3	2	4 [1 titled]
Wemyss	0	0	0	0
No of families = 110	816	467	322	349

Examples from the database which was constructed for counting:

Family name and title	Atholl John Murray, first earl Tullibardine and first duke (1660-1724)
Father	John, Marquess of Atholl (1631-1703)
Mother	Married in 1659 T Amelia Anne Sophia Stanley (d1703) 4 th daughter and sole heir of James, 7 th earl of Denby
Wife/wives	1 st married in 1683/4 T Katherine (1662-1707) daughter of William and Anne Duke and Duchess of Hamilton 2 nd married in 1710 T Mary (d1767) daughter of William, Lord Ross of Halkhead and sister of Eupham, Countess of Kilmarnock
Daughters and in laws	By Katherine: Anne , (1685/6) dy Mary (1686/9) dy Katherine (b/d 1692) dy T Susan (1699 - 1725) married on 1716 as 2 nd wife, to William Lord Haddo, earl of Aberdeen Sons and in laws: John (1684-1709) unmarried died at Malpalquet. William (1689-1746) unmarried

	<p>James of Garth, 2nd duke married 1st married in 1726, Jane, (d1748) daughter of Thomas Frederick of Downing Street, widow of James Lannoy of Hammersmith, 2nd married in 1749 Jean daughter of John Drummond of Megginch.</p> <p>Charles (b Sept 1691 d Aug 1720) unmarried.</p> <p>George (b Aug 1693) dy</p> <p>George (b Oct 1694 d Oct 1760) married in 1728 Amelia, (d1766) daughter of Dr James Murray of Glencarse and Strowan in 1728</p> <p>By Mary.</p> <p>Wilhelmina Carolina (1718- 1720) dy</p> <p>Mary (1720 -1795) married in 1749 to James, Lord Deskford later 6th earl of Findlater.</p> <p>Amelia Anne (b1721) dy</p> <p>Sons and in laws:</p> <p>John (b April 1711 d May 1787) MP for Perthshire 1734-61 and married in 1758 to Mary, (d1765) daughter and heir of Richard Dalton of Sheffield</p> <p>Mungo (1712 -1714) dy</p> <p>Edward (1714-1737) in Port Royal Jamaica after marrying in 1732 Frances Harland.</p> <p>Frederick (1716 -1743) unmarried</p>
Sisters and in laws	<p>Charlotte (1662-1735) married to Thomas Cooper.</p> <p>Emilia (b 1666) married to Hugh, Lord Lovat in 1685.</p> <p>Jane (1666 -1670)</p> <p>Katherine (1672-1686)</p>
Bothers and wives	<p>Charles created earl of Dunmore (1661-1710) married in 1682 to T Katherine, daughter and heir of Richard Watts of Great Munden.</p> <p>James of Dowally (1663-1719) married to Anne Murray (d1726) 2nd daughter of Sir Rbt Murray, Crichton of Glencairn.</p> <p>William, Lord Nairn (1664- 1726) married in 1669 to T Margaret daughter of Robert, Lord Nairn and Margaret, daughter of Patrick Graham of Inchbraco.</p> <p>Mungo (1668 died at Darien 1699)</p> <p>Edward (1669-1737) married to Katherine (d1743) daughter of John Skene of Hallyards in 1690 and widow of Sir James Anstruther of Airdrie and also Major Andrew White Lieutenant Gov of Edinburgh Castle</p> <p>Henry, dy</p> <p>George (1673-1691) was contracted to marry Margaret daughter of Sir Rbt Nairn but annulled owing to George's ill health.</p>
Other female relations/godparents	

Atholl women who can be counted .

Must be of age within the period 1689 and 1713. Of age means a woman who is an adult, married, unmarried or widowed and can be considered able to have participated in the household and family life. All women will be counted and those women with full titles [lady does not count unless married to a lord or other rank] will be recorded as such. All women will be counted but those without valid dates of birth, death or marriage will be recorded as such. Those who marry into the family after 1713 are outwith the period. Those who died before 1689 are outwith the period. Any women who died young are not counted.

20 women

10 titled

10 outwith/no dates

Total: 10 women of which 6 had titles.

Family name and title	Breadalbane John Campbell, first earl (1634-1717)
Father	Sir John Campbell of Glenorchy (d 1686)
Mother	Married in 1635 Mary (d1653) daughter of William Graham 1 st earl of Airth and Mentieth Married 2nd Elizabeth daughter of Patrick Dow More Campbell of Edinchip (Natural son of Sir Donald Campbell of Glenorchy) Married thirdly Christian (d1697) daughter of Robert Mushet of Craighead
Wife/wives	T Mary (d 1666) married in 1657 daughter of Henry Rich first earl of Holland 2nd married TR Mary (d1691) daughter of Margaret daughter of William Douglas earl of Morton and widow of George 6 th earl of Caithness Thirdly reputed to have married Mrs Mildred Littler
Daughters and in laws	By Mildred Littler Mary (d1725) married in 1719 to Archibald Cockburn of Langton
Sisters and in laws	By Mary: Agnes married in 1653 to Alexander Menzies of Weem Isabel married in 1658 to Donald Campbell of Barbrech Catherine married in 1664 to Alexander Robertson of Lude Jean (b1645) married in 1666 to John Stewart of Tullynadies Margaret married in 1676 to Duncan eldest son of Archibald McCorquodale of Phantilands (no name) married to Mr Colin Campbell of Auchnaba Mary married in 1687 to Robert Campbell of Drumsynnie Beatrix (b 1648) By Elizabeth: Elspet married 1 st John Campbell of Lochnell and 2 nd to Alexander Campbell of Stonefield Geills Marjory By Christian: Isabel married in 1683 to John McNaughton of that Ilk Susanna married in 1680 to John Campbell of Ardchattan Anna (d1765) married to Robert McNab Jean married in 1699 to Alex Campbell
Brothers and wives	By Mary: Robert (d1670) married Anna Campbell natural daughter of the earl of Argyll and widow of Sir Donald Campbell of Ardnamurchan. Alexander Duncan died unmarried in 1678 William (b1643) James (b1646)

	By Elizabeth: Patrick Colin William Walter (d1679) By Christian: James Charles (d1707)
Other info	

Women who can be counted .

Must be of age within the period 1689 and 1713. Of age means a woman who is an adult, married, unmarried or widowed and can be considered able to have participated in the household and family life. All women will be counted and those women with full titles [lady does not count unless married to a lord or higher rank] will be recorded as such. All women will be counted but those without valid dates of birth, death or marriage will be recorded as such. Those who marry into the family after 1713 are outwith the period. Those who died before 1689 are outwith the period. Any women who died young are not counted.

22 women

2 titled

13 outwith/no dates

Total: 9 women of which 3 had titles [Estimate-16 sisters here but no dates for any so have included those married after 1687 i.e. 5 as likely still to be alive]

Family name and title	Dundonald John Cochrane 2nd earl (1660-1690)
Father	William lord Cochrane (d1679)
Mother	Married in 1653 T Katherine Kennedy (d1700) daughter of John 6 th earl of Cassillis
Wife/wives	Married in 1684 T Susannah Hamilton (d1737) daughter of William and Anne, duke and duchess of Hamilton
Daughters and in laws	Anne dy sons William 3 rd earl (1686-1705) John 4 th earl (1687-1720) married in 1706 T Anne Murray daughter of Charles 1 st earl of Dunmore
Sisters and in laws	T Margaret married in 1676 to Alexander 9 th earl of Eglington T Helen married in 1680 John 15 th earl of Sutherland Jean (1695) married to John Graham 1 st viscount Dundee and then Kilsyth (she died in Utrecht with baby son)
Brothers and wives	William of Kilmaronock (d1717) married Grizel daughter of James 2 nd Marquess of Montrose Thomas (d1694) married Diana daughter of Sir David Cunningham of Roberthall Alexander married in 1698 Emilia daughter of James Murray of Polton
Other info	

Women who can be counted .

Must be of age within the period 1689 and 1713. Of age means a woman who is an adult, married, unmarried or widowed and can be considered able to have participated in the household and family life. All women will be counted and those women with full titles [lady does not count unless married to a lord or higher rank] will be recorded as such. All women will be counted but those without valid dates of birth, death or marriage will be recorded as such. Those who marry into the family after 1713 are outwith the period. Those who died before 1689 are outwith the period. Any women who died young are not counted.

[Mother Katherine counted under Cassillis, not counted here, sister Jean here already counted under Dundee, Margaret alive in 1700 so counted here, Helen also alive in the period so counted here not under Eglington or Sutherland]

7 women

4 titled

2 outwith/no dates

Total: 5 women of which 4 had titles

Family and Title	Hamilton James, 4 th duke of Hamilton (1658-1712)
Father	William, earl of Selkirk and 3 rd duke of Hamilton (1634-1694)
Mother	TR Anne , 3 rd Duchess of Hamilton (1632-1716)
Wife/wives	1 st married in 1687 T Anne Spencer (d1690) eldest daughter of Robert Spencer, 2 nd earl of Sunderland 2 nd married in 1698 T Elizabeth Gerard (d1744) only child and heiress of Digby, 5 th Lord Gerard.
Daughters and in laws	By Lady Anne Spencer Anne (b&d1689) dy Mary (1690-1707)dy By Lady Elizabeth Gerard. Elizabeth (1700-1702) dy Katherine (1701-1712)dy Henrietta (b&d 1704) dy Charlotte (1707-1777) Married in 1736 to Anthony Tracy Keck of Great Tew, Oxford. Sons James 5 th duke. William (1705-1734) MP for Lanark 1734 but died that year. Married in 1733 Frances Hawes of Purley Hall (she married again in 1735, William, Viscount Vane) Anne – a son- (b 1709 d 1748) Queen Anne was godmother. Married Mary , only daughter and heir of Francis Edwards of Leicester although no formal record of the marriage and she repudiated the marriage to safeguard her sons finances after a quarrel. She never remarried but Lord Anne did, in 1742 to Anna Charlotte Maria , daughter and heiress of Charles Powell of Pen-y-bank, Carmarthen.
Sisters and in laws	Mary (1657-1666) dy Katherine (1662-1707) married to John Murray, 2 nd duke of Atholl Susan (1667-1737) married 1 st , John Cochrane, earl of Dundonald who died 1690. Married 2 nd Charles, 3 rd Marquis of Tweeddale who died 1715. Margaret (1668-1731) married James Maule 4 th earl of Panmure.
Brothers and wives	William (b 1659 d 1681) died in France no issue Charles earl of Selkirk (b 1664 d 1739) died unmarried John earl of Ruglen (b 1665 d 1744) Married 1st to Lady Anne Kennedy daughter of John 7 th earl of Cassillis then married 2 nd to Elizabeth Hutchison, widow of John, Lord Kennedy, his first wife's elder brother and daughter of Charles Hutchinson of Owthorpe, Nottingham. Basil (1671-1701) drowned in an incident that his mother foresaw. Married in 1691 T Mary (d 1760) daughter of David Dunbar, son of Sir David Dunbar of Baldoon, baronet whose

	heir she was. George earl of Orkney, (1666-1737) married in 1695 T Elizabeth (d 1733), sister of the 1 st earl of Jersey and daughter of Sir Edward Villiers, Knight Marshal of England, she had been a mistress of King William III.
Other info	A son was also born to James' mistress Lady Barbara Fitzroy, 3 rd daughter of Charles III and the Duchess of Cleveland - Charles (1691 – 1754) James Abercrombie another 'natural' son died 1724.

Women who can be counted .

Must be of age within the period 1689 and 1713. Of age means a woman who is an adult, married, unmarried or widowed and can be considered able to have participated in the household and family life. All women will be counted and those women with full titles [lady does not count unless married to a lord or higher rank] will be recorded as such. All women will be counted but those without valid dates of birth, death or marriage will be recorded as such. Those who marry into the family after 1713 are outwith the period. Those who died before 1689 are outwith the period. Any women who died young are not counted.

[sisters Katherine and Susan and Margaret counted under Atholl, Dundonald and Panmure. Not counted here. Anne and Elizabeth married to Ruglen also counted under Cassillis, not counted here]

.

10 women [including his mistress]

6 titled [Duchess Anne in her own right]

4 outwith/no date

Total: 6 women all titled

Family name and title	Mar John Erskine 6 th earl of Mar (1675-1732)
Father	Charles Erskine 5 th earl of Mar (1650-1689)
Mother	Married in 1674 T Mary Maule (1655-1710) only daughter of George 2 nd earl of Panmure
Wife/wives	1 st T Margaret Hay (d 1707 aged 21) daughter of Thomas Hay 7 th earl of Kinoull 2 nd T Francis (d 1761) daughter of Evelyn Pierrepont, 1 st duke of Kingston
Daughters and in laws	Daughter to second wife Frances (d1776) married her cousin James Erskine (see below) Sons –to first wife Thomas (1705-1766) John dy
Sisters and in laws	Jean (d1736) married in 1712 to Sir Hugh Paterson of Bannockburn
Brothers and wives	James, lord Grange (d1754) married T Rachel , (d1749) daughter of John Chiesly of Dalry Henry or Harry died unmarried
Other info	

Women who can be counted .

Must be of age within the period 1689 and 1713. Of age means a woman who is an adult, married, unmarried or widowed and can be considered able to have participated in the household and family life. All women will be counted and those women with full titles [lady does not count unless married to a lord or higher rank] will be recorded as such. All women will be counted but those without valid dates of birth, death or marriage will be recorded as such. Those who marry into the family after 1713 are outwith the period. Those who died before 1689 are outwith the period. Any women who died young are not counted.

[wife Margaret counted under Dupplin not counted here]

5 women

3 titled

0 outwith

Total: 5 women of which 3 were titled

Family name and title	Roths John Leslie 9 th earl of Roths
Father	Charles 5 th earl of Haddington (d1685)
Mother	TR Margaret (d1700) Countess of Roths eldest daughter of John 7 th earl of Roths and 1 st duke
Wife/wives	T Jean Hay (d1731) daughter of John 2 nd Marquess of Tweeddale
Daughters and in laws	Jane dy Mary dy Margaret (1710/67) Anne dy Sons John 10 th earl married in 1763 Mary Lloyd (d1820) Charles died unmarried 1769 Thomas (d1772) James (1703-1761) David dy William died unmarried 1764 Francis (b1709) Andrew (1712-76)
Sisters and in laws	Anna (b1676)
Brothers and wives	Thomas earl of Haddington Charles dy
Other info	

Women who can be counted .

Must be of age within the period 1689 and 1713. Of age means a woman who is an adult, married, unmarried or widowed and can be considered able to have participated in the household and family life. All women will be counted and those women with full titles [lady does not count unless married to a lord or higher rank] will be recorded as such. All women will be counted but those without valid dates of birth, death or marriage will be recorded as such. Those who marry into the family after 1713 are outwith the period. Those who died before 1689 are outwith the period. Any women who died young are not counted.

4 women

2 titled [his mother titled in her own right]

2 outwith/no dates

Total: 2 women both titled

Appendix 3

List of *squadrone volante* members

Nobility

Thomas Hamilton, sixth earl of Haddington

Patrick Home, first earl of Marchmont

James Graham, fourth Marquis of Montrose

John Leslie, ninth earl of Rothes

John Ker, fifth earl of Roxburgh

James Sandilands, seventh Lord Torphichen

John Hay, second Marquis of Tweeddale

Shire Commissioners

Sir William Anstruther of that Ilk

George Baillie of Jerviswood

William Bennet of Grubbet

John Bruce of Kinross

Sir Thomas Burnet of Leys

Sir Alexander Campbell of Cessnock

John Cockburn of Ormiston

Robert Dundas of Arniston

Mungo Graeme of Gorthie

John Haldane of Gleneagles

James Haliburton of Pitcur

Sir William Ker of Greenhead

William Nisbet of Direlton

Patrick Bruce of Bunzion

Sir John Erskine of Alva

Sir Peter Halkett of Pitfirrane

Sir Andrew Home of Kimmerghame

James Spittal of Leuchat

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GD3 Eglinton Muniments

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GD24 Abercairny Muniments

GD25 Ailsa Muniments

GD26 Leven and Melville Muniments

GD 40 Lothian Muniments

GD45 Dalhousie Muniments

GD112 Breadalbane Muniments

GD 124 Mar and Kellie Muniments

GD158 Marchmont Muniments

GD205 Ogilvie of Inverquharity

GD220 Montrose Muniments

GD248 Seafield Muniments

GD406 Hamilton Muniments

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